

THE JAMIROQUAI ARTICLES ARCHIVE

| The Transcriptions Collection | 30 Years Of

Jamiroquai Edition

Compiled/Written By JamiroFan2000

OPENING PROLOGUE:

This new Jamiroquai-related archival composition project would not be possible without the amazing work of Kara Reuter, whose original Jamiroquai fansite was the inspiration for the Jamiroquai Articles Archive.

This invaluable archive, comprised of past Jamiroquai Magazine Clippings Of Music Reviews/Release Reviews & early interviews with the band Jamiroquai, from between the years of 1993 - 1999, was the crown jewel of the one of the first Jamiroquai fansites of the pre-social media internet on the fan-run 'Jamiroquai.com' before it ultimately gave into the domain-getting intentions of Sony Music during the heyday of Jamiroquai's 1996 Ground-breaking, Mainstream-breaking album "Travelling Without Moving".

I still considered the 'Jamiroquai Articles Archive' as one of the most important fan-lead repositories of archival Jamiroquai media in the 30 year history of the band and always wanted to do a project to respect it's important, under-appreciated impact on the early days of the Online Family and I hope this project finally gives it the respect & high honor I always thought I always thought it justly deserved.

I would like to personally thank Kara Reuter for being a visionary of the Online Family of JAA and everyone who contributed to the upkeep of the once great 'Jamiroquai.com' fansite and those rare few who strided to make these early moves to solidify the progressive direction of the burgeoning Online Family in Jamiroquai's formulative years into the highly influential and trail-blazing mainstream music act that continue to push the musical/lyrical envelope with every one of their past 8 albums of musical output.

Enjoy this project work and I hope the Family gains more appreciation for those who came to be those early cornerstones of the strong Online Family we all now have the luxury of being a proud member of today, young and old fans, 30 years and on.

*Sincerely A Fan,
~JamiroFan2000~*

SECTION #1: RECORDING REVIEWS

Sub-Section #1: “High Times” Reviews

"High Times" is the final single to be released from the album Travelling Without Moving. Beautiful remixes come out of the singles by Jamiroquai and Roger Sanchez. All articles are listed from the latest down.

Article #1 | UK Singles Chart December 7, 1997 “High Times” by James Masterton

“After a brace of Number 6 hits earlier this year, Jamiroquai lands just inside the Top 20 with this new single, perhaps lacking the minimalist magic of Alright which was his last single back in May. Nonetheless it extends his run of Top 20 hits to 8, stretching back to Space Cowboy in October 1994.”

ARTICLE #2 | Dotmusic December 1997 “High Times”

“Roger Sanchez has provided the perfect reply to those critics muttering about the slipping standard of his remixes with this scorching version of Jamiroquai's latest single. Of course it helps if you have good music to work with and the song lends itself well to a house treatment. Nevertheless this is funky house at its best with Sanchez using a complex arrangement of breakbeats, brass riffs, a tough bassline and plenty of squelchy noises to complement JK's wailing vocals. In fact, to really appreciate the detailed production you have to flip over to the Doobi Dub where you can hear the churning noises and rhythms in all their glory.”

Sub-Section #2: “Cosmic Girl” Reviews

With "Cosmic Girl" Jamiroquai reintroduces a lively disco beat to popular music. Both Jamiroquai and David Morales sank their teeth into the remixes. All articles are listed from the latest down.



ARTICLE #1 | Billboard
January 25th 1997
“Cosmic Girl”

“Despite a string of singles that never fail to hit the creative mark, Jamiroquai has not enjoyed the major pop success here that it has in its native U.K. That could change with the onset of this first offering from the band's new “Travelling Without Moving” set. Mastermind Jay Kay craftily combines classic soul nuggets with the disco soaked house music that has everyone gleefully twirling these days. The album version sparks with live instrumentation that breathes considerable depth into the chorus, while David Morales' remix has a more glossy tone that will sound awesome on a crowded club floor.”

ARTICLE #2 | NME
December 7th 1996
“Cosmic Girl”

“... “She sends me into hyper space when I see her pretty face,” - cheep-cheep-doodle-squibble, his baybay's living on the moon etc, etc. (and who can blame her?) They'd have been better off with the one on the album that's three-and-half minutes of a didgeridoo solo 'cos that, make no mistake, has The Funk. Unlike this, which has nothing but The Bunkem.”

SUB-SECTION #3:
“Travelling Without Moving” Reviews

Travelling Without Moving marks album three for Jamiroquai and has gone triple platinum in the UK and gold in the US. The album demonstrates that the band still has the power to make a good album between the two year gap and celebrates their first big time success in the US. With Virtual Insanity being the first of a soon-to-be long list of great singles, they received awards across the world (including four at the MTV VMA's. All articles are listed from the latest down.

ARTICLE #1 | Independent Retail Directory
April 1997
“A Few Words On Jamiroquai”

“Over the course of two acclaimed albums Jamiroquai have pushed the beat to new dimensions and in the process have helped to redefine the parameters of soul.”

“That willingness to take a chance and bring the noise is evident on their third album Travelling Without Moving. Already a smash hit in the UK, Europe and the Far East, Travelling Without Moving blissfully merges old school chops, rare groove rhythms and one world consciousness, resulting in a fluid funky record that is Jamiroquai’s most accomplished and mature work to date.”

“Travelling Without Moving was written by the band and produced by its irrepressible front man Jason (Jay) Kay with Al Stone. Shifting from the silky tenderness of “Spend A Lifetime” to the disco flavored title track, or the hit jungle collaboration with M Beat, “Do You Know Where Youre Coming From,” Jamiroquai takes you on a joyous musical journey. As Jay says, “It’s funkier and catchier than our past records. I wanted this to be an up album, with memorable choruses and stronger hooks. That’s something I hadn’t exploited before.”

“Jamiroquai’s sharpened pop sensibility is obvious on the first single “Cosmic Girl,” a sexy futuristic love song set to a slinky Philly International groove and anchored by Jays soulful vocals. Also noteworthy is “Virtual Insanity.” Propelled by a sunny, finger popping melody, “Virtual Insanity” examines the underbelly of future technology, tackles the unlikely subject of genetic engineering and filters it through Jays unique perspective. It is that perspective, along with his undeniable charisma and willingness to take a stand that caused a leading British magazine to declare, “There aren’t many stars worth a damn, but Jay is there.”

“Jason Kay was brought up with music. His mother was a jazz singer and as a kid Jay (or JK as his friends call him) tagged along on her gigs, soaking up the atmosphere and the sounds. In love with American soul and mid 70s jazz-soul fusion greats like Donald Byrd and Roy Ayers, Jay set about forming a band that would reflect his respect for the groove but that would speak to London’s club culture. That group was Jamiroquai: the name was inspired by Jays affinity for the Iroquois nation and by his determination to create music that jammed and flowed. Quickly the 22 year old boho with the voice that conjured up Stevie Wonder was the toast of the cognoscenti and, more importantly, the kids. In 1992, their underground classic “When You Gonna Learn,” released on the indie label Acid Jazz, gave a face to the burgeoning musical movement. It also made Jamiroquai the subject of a very intense bidding war, one that was eventually won by Sony, who signed the group to an 8-album deal.”

“Emergency On Planet Earth debuted at number 1 on the British charts, making Jamiroquai the top selling UK debut act of 1993. Heralded for their spacey blur of rhythm, rhyme, and eco-politics, Jamiroquai quickly established themselves worldwide and Jay was singled out by the tough American press for his soul-boy style. Emergency On Planet Earth found Jamiroquai positioned as one of Englands biggest breakout acts.”

“1995’s Return Of The Space Cowboy proved that the band was no flash in the pan. The CD went platinum in the UK and a critically acclaimed tour solidified Jamiroquai’s growing American fan base. Yet despite the growing buzz, jay began to feel the sting of the British press, who tore into his often

outspoken statements and tried to take him to task for his off the cuff remarks. Jay brushes off the criticism. "Look, if I were a great orator I'd be a politician, but I'm not. Im good at making my point through songs."

"The point is well taken on Travelling Without Moving. An admittedly happier record than Return Of The Space Cowboy, Travelling Without Moving is playful yet introspective. Whether taking on drugs on the reflective "High Times" or just letting the beat move you on the inventive "Didjerama" (featuring the band's trademark didgeridoo), Travelling Without Moving is Jamiroquai's missive for 1997. And proof that trends dont survive, talent does."

ARTICLE #2 | Soular World
March 11th 1997
"Travelling Without Moving"
By DJ Sun

"Do I remember the first time I heard about Jamiroquai? It was 1994 and Soulstice was fully operational that summer. The powerful lyrics of "When You Gonna Learn" were forever imprinted in my memory as I wore out the 12" remixes on those memorable summer friday nights, dj-ing at Soulstice. That soulful voice, jumping bassline, and those wonderful horns just made everything feel alright, despite the gloomy message behind the song. Return of The Space Cowboy, the follow up to the debut album Emergency On Planet Earth, continued the "feel-good vibes with a message" with tracks like "Mr. Moon", "Space Cowboy", "Half The Man", and "Morning Glory," while confirming the musical prowess of Jamiroquai."

"Well, this January, they came around for a third time with Travelling Without Moving, and this time around there's a sense of "destiny". Judging from the calls and questions I get about when the cd would drop and when Jamiroquai will come to Houston, the buzz is definitely on! Everytime I go to the Acid Jazz Server on the internet there are at least three different postings regarding their tour in the U.S; signs of things to come!"

"Well, now that it's here, let's talk about the album. All press releases and support articles, about how Jay Kay is a rebel and how he shoots off at the mouth, aside, lets just delve into the music. There are thirteen tracks on this treasure, starting off with "Virtual Insanity." The message continues on this track: the preachy, foreboding style which gets Jay Kay in "trouble" with the UK press, is presented in a track which evolves from a piano riff intro into a chorus consisting of full strings. In the middle of the song, a mellow break is inserted as if to give a minute of contemplation to the message, which deals with the future being "made of virtual insanity"."

"Next we meet the "Cosmic Girl", a disco beat: bassline, strings, and synthesizer included. This "Cosmic Girl" is "putting the lads in ecstasy" and "sending them into hyperspace." The Space Cowboy meets his girl."

"Use The Force" starts off with latin drum and percussion pattern, which start your feet atapping and when the keys enter, you're nodding your head. By the time the horns arrive you're ready to jump; infectious groove about self-determination: "I must believe I can be anyone."

*"Everyday" slows things down considerably with a love song to put you in the mood for some serious....
"Alright" is bass thumping funk cut about more love with a synth riff that gives it a "Yarbrough & Peoples" feel (remember "Don't You Stop The Music"). Can you spell f-e-e-l-g-o-o-d?*

No, I'm not gonna give away the whole thing! You'll have to check it for yourself. I'll say this though, the rest includes a slammer ("High Times"), a roots reggae cut ("Drifting Along"), a drum & bass track (the bonus "Do You Know"), a couple of retro-funk stompers ("Travelling" and "You are My Love") and oh yeah, the Didjeridoo is back with 2 tracks ("Didjerama" and "Didjital Vibrations"). The boys close out with another love song on "Spend a Lifetime".

So there you have it!.. and without any of the obligatory "Jay Kay's been criticized for sounding like..." or "Jay Kay grew up as a rebel and troubled teen and..." or how about, "Jay Kay spoke out about the environment and contradicted himself when he said..." While you'll find a lot of those references on the net and in British articles, I just wanna stick to the music, and to me it just all "feels good!" Travelling Without Moving is highly recommended for a better environment!

ARTICLE #3 | The Daily Barometer

February 21st 1997

"Jamiroquai's Acid Jazz Roots"

By Rob Wille

*After overwhelming success in Britain, Jamiroquai, with their new album *Traveling Without Moving*, looks to conquer the American charts, and put everyone in a groove. Jamiroquai is an acid-jazz/Euro-funk band that hails from a town outside of London. On their third album for Sony records, they manage to incorporate a steady atmospheric groove with jazzy horns and the wonderfully lush voice of Jay Kay, which all makes for an excellent record.*

*It's hard to categorize Jamiroquai because they're so different, but because of Jamiroquai's vast influences, *Traveling Without Moving* has a wide appeal, like the didgeridu on the songs "Didjerama" and "Didjital Vibrations," both laced with a constant groove and, at times, a light melodic undertone; to the Brit-reggae tune, "Drifting Time," a song that sounds a bit like UB40. The band is backed by a horn section that blows like a '70s rhythm section -- very Chicago-ish. Most songs are very danceable, and are made with that it mind. *Traveling* is an album that extends its welcome to all facets of the listening population; anyone who likes Motown, modern R & B, jazz, hip-hop and funk is bound to enjoy this mix of eclectic groove house music.*

*Traveling opens with the soulful "Virtual Insanity," a song that sounds like something off of Stevie Wonder's *Musiquarium*. Jay Kay's voice has the ability to transcend the band and wail about like a gospel singer, much like a young Stevie Wonder. "Virtual Insanity" is a song about science controlling*

nature: And now every mother can choose the color of her child/ That's not nature's way/ Well that's what they said yesterday. This was the first single in Britain and reached a modest position at number three on the charts.

"Cosmic Girl," the first U.S. single, follows a danceable number that is disco-inflated and booty-shaking. Undertones of the '70s ring throughout "Cosmic," echoing She's just a Cosmic girl/ From another galaxy/ My heart's at zero gravity/ She's from a cosmic world/ putting me in ecstasy. "Cosmic" is a catchy tune with a lot of promise, maybe the promise of landing Jamiroquai with its first hit in America.

*Jamiroquai has been received with open arms overseas. Their first album, *Emergency On Planet Earth*, sky-rocketed to number one on the British charts, and sold over 1.5 million copies -- not bad for a freshman group. They followed with the funkier of the three albums, *Space Cowboy*. It did not receive the same commercial attention but fared well, selling a half-million copies in Japan. Jamiroquai has leapt out of obscurity, from a small but popular club scene that produced *The Brand New Heavies*. By outlasting and outselling their mates, it looks as though Jamiroquai is the heavy-weight of the acid jazz club scene.*

"Use the Force" is a fitting title for a Jamiroquai song, considering the recent success of the re-release of "Star Wars" on the big screen. "Use the Force" is driven by an afro-beat, surrounded by a wa-wa guitar, something sounding like, "The Son of Shaft." In "Use the Force," we are introduced to the positive lyrics that have come to characterize Jamiroquai: I'm a rocketman/ I'm a superstar/ I can be anyone/ I can step beyond any of my boundaries.

Traveling Without Moving has few weak points, except for "Everyday," a slow smooth groove, with a thumping bass line, that is best listened to on a date. "Everyday" wouldn't be such a bad song on a mediocre album, but on this album it is weak and thin. The orchestration in the song sounds like a weak attempt to revive the sounds generated by the Electric Light Orchestra.

"High Times" is a standout track, one that plunges into the fuzz zone, combining hard-edged guitar playing, a melodic funk beat, and a lyrical content with a message. "High Times" is not a song that condones drug use, but offers a metaphorical perspective of the subject: The twisted crystal kingdom/ where you live your nine lives/ And your head spins/ with purple cyclones made of dezadrine.

*When asked about the song, Jamiroquai's frontman, Jay Kay, told *Blues and Soul Magazine*, "...anyhow, music makes a lot more sense than drugs. That's how I get my highs, that's how I want my highs. But the highs extend to more than that; they also extend to being in control of my personal life, and being in control of my personal life means being able to do music, and that is the drug."*

Jay Kay once dabbled in drugs, but now, as he says in "High Times," he has changed: Searching my reflection/ for a glimpse of another me/ I've got to get away from all these high times/ because these high times are killing me. In "High Times," we also get a taste of the DJ style record scratching that is prominent in the London acid jazz club scene.

Traveling Without Thinking, a slick production with more hooks than a Scarlet Iris fly shop, baits the listener with its infectious blend of styles, and by the end of the album, will reel in many new fans. Jamiroquai is a band that is flying to success in an unheard of fashion, and it's not because they are being pushed or widely marketed; it's because their music is different, an alternative to the music that is flooding commercial radio.

I'm sure Traveling won't be the last we hear of Jamiroquai, because it's only the third album of an eight-album deal with Sony. Traveling is a definite must on the music shopping list, and in my opinion, is highly recommended.

ARTICLE #4 | The Source
February 1997
"Travelling Without Moving"
By Kweli Wright

Jason Kay, frontman of Britfunk group Jamiroquai, is a walking contradiction. On one hand, he's the environmentalist, soul-singing son of a jazz vocalist, who has been known to donate portions of his merchandising profits to Greenpeace. On the other, he's a cocky, white, 26-year-old Londoner who spent his initial royalties on a gas-guzzling Aston Martin, and is stuck on sub-seventies funk. Add to the mix a band that has critically updated a tried and tested musical genre and you've got "Travelling Without Moving."

A formal campaign to "bring back the boogie," "Travelling" is essentially about the metaphysics of having a good time. The group has detoured from the earthy jazz-funk-soul of their 1993 debut, "Emergency on Planet Earth," and the introspective follow-up, "Return of the Space Cowboy," for a more predictable, yet sonically diverse, sound. Jamiroquai have a thousand musical tricks up their sleeves: edgy horns laced with jazz intricacies, energetic bass lines and disco rhythms, and a wider variety of tempos than usual in British funk. It all equals funk-lite.

Check "Use the Force," where Kay's mystical lyrics flow over a thumping bass line and an Earth, Wind and Fire-esque brass section. "I must believe I'm a rocket man / I'm a superstar, I can be anyone / I can step beyond all boundaries."

Or you could try "High Times," with its razor-edged funky guitars. "Drifting Along," a reggae track of the sort The Police used to do, is an easy vibe, while the layered instrumentals of "Didjerama" and "Didjital Vibrations" will have you (or keep you) trippin'.

Most of "Travelling"s 13 tracks are blatantly mainstream, but done with such confidence that you may forgive Jamiroquai's one dimensional musical delivery as they traffic between jazz virtuosity and dance-floor boogie necessity.

ARTICLE #5 | The Onion
January 15th - 21st 1997
"Travelling Without Moving"

A few new wrinkles are revealed on Jamiroquai's third album: The acid-jazzy dance band gets a reggae

thing going on "Drifting Along," while use of the group of the group's beloved didgeridoo is limited to the tracks that allude to the instrument's name ("Didjerama," "Didjital Vibrations"). But for the most part, Travelling Without Moving just sounds an awful lot like its predecessors, with lots of fluid, jazzy jams; socially conscious (read: unbearable) lyrics about the world we're livin' in and why we should love each other: another earnest Stevie Wonder imitation by singer Jay Kay; and cover art that makes tired use of the tired band logo. It's a tribute to Jamiroquai that more of the same still sounds pretty damned good.

ARTICLE #6 | Mr. Showbiz
January 15th 1997
"Travelling Without Moving"
By Bob Gulla

For many hip and funky Europeans, the music of skinny London dance guru Jason Kay is already an essential part of the pop soundscape. His third album as Jamiroquai, Travelling Without Moving, has sold over two million copies worldwide, which is doubly impressive considering that the album is only now hitting U.S. shores. But fey white-boy funk--with its silly pretenses and unnatural soul--has traditionally not fared so well Stateside, meaning the Thin One may have a tough time cracking this market. Kay is impressive as he splatters suggestions of Bob Marley ("Drifting Along"), Marvin Gaye ("Everyday"), and Parliament ("High Times") atop his rollicking dance grooves. Terrific production further enhances the album's best tracks, including the James Brown-inspired "You Are My Love" and the roiling dance cut "Virtual Insanity." Unfortunately, some of Kay's more experimental leanings, especially his peculiar fascination with a didgeridoo (a sort of aboriginal trumpet) on "Didjerama" and "Didjital Vibrations," keep the momentum from reaching a higher pitch. That said, Travelling Without Moving is far from a disappointing listen, even if it doesn't prompt you to abandon your armchair and beer for a spin on the dance floor.

ARTICLE #7 | Rocktropolis
January 14th 1997
"Space Jamiroquai"
By Jazzbo

Consider that the platinum voice of Jamiroquai crooner Jay Kay sounds like the heartiest of soul sisters, and has all the vocal stylings of a young Stevie Wonder, and you will instantly recognize the secret behind the U.K. group's infectious blend of cosmic soul. Yes, the rest of the band can fretlessly, and quite convincingly, conquer any musical movement they choose (Wonder Twins power activate--shape of... Kool and the Gang!), but ultimately it's Jay Kay that compels even the most inactive of chords to loosen up and sing along.

While decidedly more upbeat than the intoxicating mood pieces of their last album, Return of the Space Cowboy, the group's high-tech-themed third album stays true to the myriad body-rock styles that have earned them a huge worldwide following. Jamiroquai's corner of the universe is a nexus of

different musical eras and subgenres where, indeed, six is nine. Their new songs are throwbacks to the club-oriented disco age of the late '70s, as on "Cosmic Girl," and the soft-funk ballads from the early '80s, like "Everyday." Even an acoustic drum-and-bass number, "Do You Know Where You're Coming From," and the ska-dub of "Drifting Along" assimilate into the aesthetics of the album seamlessly. That's concrete evidence that, where they're from, a divisive, microcosmic view of music just doesn't register.

Of course, there are futile moments where some of the album's elements get lost in the cross-Atlantic translation-- the appeal of noisy, ultra-fast dance numbers, for example. But in the overall and endless pursuit of shake-ability, let this be your indulgence.

ARTICLE #8 | The Backbeat

January 1997

"Borrowing Without Asking"

By John Slepian

UK pop sensations Jamiroquai bring their brand of retro soul and funk to America with their latest LP, but success seems unlikely here in the homeland of Motown, Stax and Philly International.

Whether or not you enjoy the new album from Jamiroquai depends largely on two things: whether you put a high value on originality and whether you believe, as do the band, that the R&B of the mid-to-late '70s was the pinnacle of pop-music achievement. In the past few years, Jamiroquai have been quite successful in England, extracting the few remaining nuggets from the soul/funk gold mine. But while English pop music has exported such innovators as The Beatles and Tricky, Jamiroquai seem more likely to join the list of such obscure, parochial UK favorites as Cliff Richard and Shakin' Stevens.

*Sounding uncannily like Stevie Wonder, the group's front man, Jay Kay, vamps his way through the first half of *Traveling Without Moving* in a remarkably derivative fashion, moving seamlessly through the styles of the '70s. Spacy lyrical themes abound, but what seemed wild and original coming from George Clinton just sounds contrived coming from a young white Englishman well-known for collecting sports cars. From the middle of the album on, things do pick up a little, thanks to a showing of contemporary influences such as Deep Forest and Mad Professor. "Didjerama" and "Didjital Vibrations" make heavy use of -- you guessed it -- one of the world's least versatile instruments, the Australian didjeridoo. But in contrast to what's come before, this faux world beat seems fresh.*

*Admittedly, *Traveling Without Moving* is competently played and, despite their inflexibility here, Jamiroquai reportedly are a phenomenal live act. But at a time when the full catalogs of artists such as Stevie Wonder, Cameo and Earth, Wind & Fire are readily available on CD, the obvious question *Traveling* raises is, "Why buy this?"*

ARTICLE #9 | Jerusalem Post

October 8th 1996

"Travelling Without Moving"

By David Brinn

This is another third album, this time by Brit-funk faves Jamiroquai. If it's an uptown blend of soul, funk and disco you're looking for, this is the right address.

Israelis must be banging down the door, because Travelling without Moving has been firmly entrenched near the top of the local charts since its release.

The vocals are, typically of this genre, innocuous, but the point is not to move your mind, but your body.

And on that task, Jamiroquai succeeds 100%. Smooth and cool, this record goes down like lemonade on a hot summer day.

ARTICLE #10 | Q Magazine

October 1996

“Travelling Without Moving”

By Linton Chiswick

The moment Jamiroquai broke into the charts in 1993, a nation of soul fans was split. Half jumped into their Adidas Gazelles and danced, celebrating the emergence of a West London soulboy outspoken about the use of real musicians and instruments. The other half took offence at what they saw as shameless retro posturing. In a hat. Travelling Without Moving isn't going to clear the issue up any. Tighter and more compact in its production than the epic funk arrangements of the band's previous record, The Return of the Space Cowboy, it takes the small group soul sound that characterised Jamiroquai's debut and gives it a fat, squishy disco feel. But no-one with ears can deny Jason Kay's musicality - he's an extraordinary singer, and proves it here, injecting the entire project with an arrogant, contemporary energy.

ARTICLE #11 | The Guardian

September 13th 1996

“Travelling Without Moving”

A line from the opening track tells us everything about these Britfunk superstars: 'This love we have for useless new technology.' The only technology on Jay Kay and company's third album is the old kind: real horns, strings and that blasted didgeridoo that turns up on every album. It's all listenable, though, if you can stomach Kay's 'mystical' conceits. Cosmic Girl, which employs buoyant Earth, Wind & Fire-style harmonies, is fine, as is Use the Force, which builds into a horn-heavy arouser. Just don't read the lyrics.

ARTICLE #12 | Sunday Times

September 8th 1996

“Travelling Without Moving”

By Andrew Smith

In terms of the responses they provoke, Jamiroquai are one of the strangest groups in the country. Essentially, the group is singer Jay Kaye [sic] and backing musicians. He and his music are unarguably derivative, coming on extraordinarily like Innervisions-era Stevie Wonder. The mainstream music press has been unwilling to forgive a white man for what it sees as cultural imperialism, while the black press and public appear not to have a problem with it. As with Suede, people's response to the music tends to hinge on their instinctive reaction to the recycled tone of the voice. Jamiroquai's enormous popularity suggests that plenty feel just fine about it and those people will be pleased with Travelling Without Moving, which moves on from Innervisions to lush Songs in the Key of Life-period Wonder. Even sceptics may find the razor-edged funk of High Times or the driven 1970s disco of Cosmic Girl hard to resist, once they've taken the necessary precaution of dealing with the lyrics by means of a lobotomy, serious meditation or some such device.

ARTICLE #13 | The Observer
September 8th 1996
"Travelling Without Moving"

Jamiroquai's Britfunk provides a neat parallel to Britpop: an essentially retro sound delivered for Nineties sensibilities. Their third album adds touches of reggae, drum and bass and even ambient didgeridoo to their Seventies soul, but it's the vivacious vocals of Jay Kay which remains their calling card; on Travelling Without Moving, he's rarely less than irrepressible.

ARTICLE #14 | Billboard
August 31st 1996
"Travelling Without Moving"

Jamiroquai, the British acid-jazz act whose debut album "Emergency on Planet Earth," was a European best seller, is about to release its third album, "Travelling Without Moving," in Europe, preceded by the smooth, cool, and funkified single "Virtual Insanity."

In a nod to Jamiroquai's strong following in Italy- and the fast-car fascination of front man Jay Kay- the European launch of the album (which features the Italian tricolors on its cover) will be held at the Italian Grand Prix at Monza Sept. 8, following a showcase the night before.

SUB-SECTION #4
"Light Years" Review



Article #1 | Billboard
February 17th 1996
“Light Years”
By Larry Flick

The time has come for this brash U.K. acid- jazz act to find a broader audience in the States. On this second single from his underappreciated album, "The Return Of The Space Cowboy," Jamiroquai complements a horn-fiddled funk throwdown with savvy remixes that flirt with mainstream house and hip-hop concepts without eliminating the quirky tone of the original version. DJs are advised to pick a mix and start spinning it immediately.

SUB-SECTION #5
“The Return Of The Space Cowboy” Reviews



Jamiroquai's second album The Return of the Space Cowboy continues the tradition started by the first one. Many of the songs written and tested on audiences as they did a small tour after EOPE's release, many show that refined edge. All articles are listed from the latest down.

ARTICLE #1 | The College Hill Independent
March 21st 1996
“The Return Of The Space Cowboy”
By Rob Fellman

Okay, so Return of the Space Cowboy is not really a new release--it came out in 1994. But Sam reviewed an older album a couple of weeks ago, so I figure it's my turn. And it's not like the Independent funds these reviews either. No, sir--we have to buy these records ourselves. So they'd damn better be happy with whatever I give them. Wow, I've turned into a regular prima donna, haven't I?

That aside, I'm reviewing this album because it is amazing. I bought it about four or five weeks ago, and besides a few tense days where I lent it to a friend, telling him emphatically "you have to get this" (and so do you, dear reader), it hasn't left my changer. My roommates are getting annoyed.

This record is some of the best funk I've ever heard. Let me qualify that--it's hardly straight-ahead early funk music where the song lingers on a chord for several minutes, building up the tension, and then after sixteen measures of some guy (well, for the record, James Brown) shouting "Now let's go to the bridge," the chord finally changes. No, these guys have extremely elaborate chord progressions ("Stillness in Time," in particular), especially for funk music. Granted, there are songs that do tend to linger on a particular pattern for a while ("Light Years," "Just Another Story," "The Kids"), but both that repeated pattern and the eventual change are so gratifying that you don't tend to mind at all.

The drumming is excellent, the bass playing tasteful and just funky and slap-and-pop-happy enough without moving into the region a friend of mine would term "wanking." The keyboards use the best, mellowest, most reverbed-out sounds around. One sound reminds me of a little kitten meowing (on "Half The Man"--and that's not a Stone Temple Pilots cover, thank God). On Return of the Space Cowboy, the keyboarding doesn't sound silly--it works.

Jay, Jamiroquai's vocalist, even though he's white and English, sounds just like Stevie Wonder. And that's a good thing. Supposedly he's a really good dancer, too, but of course that doesn't come across on the album. The album does end, however, with a live version of "Light Years," and there's this one part where the band doesn't appear to be doing much of anything, just playing the changes, but the crowd is going wild. So I imagine that he's doing backflips or the moonwalk or something ridiculous like that.

His melodies are great, especially on "Half The Man" and "Mr. Moon." Sometimes the lyrics are quite good ("Set at the speed of cheeba / we'll go deeper"), but other times--and this is perhaps my only complaint about the record--they do get a bit silly: "There's a stillness in time / that I just can't define / does your heart bleed like mine." But I'm splitting hairs--his voice could make up for lyrics a lot worse than those.

Jamiroquai is also amazing at arranging their songs. These songs aren't bare at all; the keyboards are almost always playing both chords and melodies, and the roaming basslines fill up any gaps in the sound that the keyboards and guitar leave. The occasional burst of horns are perfect, and inject a lot of drive into whatever the bass and keyboards are laying down. And I don't even want to discuss the flute solos. Wow!

Whether or not they're playing fast songs or slow songs, they know exactly how to play for the perfect mood. Look, I can't say enough good things about this album. You need to run, and run quickly, to the

record store to get this. Even as you read this, you're wasting time that could be better spent listening to Jamiroquai.

ARTICLE #2 | YSB

October 31st 1995

“The Return Of The Space Cowboy”

By Alphonse McCollough

Though they turned heads with their debut offering, Emergency on Planet Earth, the mention of Jamiroquai or the mellifluous vocals of frontman/true vessel, J Kay, has normally been greeted with puzzled, never heard of them type of looks. The release of The Return of the Space Cowboy, however, should change all of that.

Space Cowboy is a collection of songs about life, presented in a very comfortable, timeless manner--save for language and technology, we could easily be dropping the needle instead of pressing play on a CD system. Where Emergency was phat but seemed rushed at points, on Space Cowboy, Jamiroquai is a smoother, more controlled band, their maturity evident as players and composers, making it a more complete offering. Though the album as a whole is a music fan's dream--you can play the disc in its entirety and flow from cut to cut--there are a few startling standouts. The lovely "Half the Man" laments the drastic overnight changes falling out of love effects, and "Light Years" speaks of how far one can be from the truth and knowing oneself. But "Manifest Destiny" has JK assuming responsibility for the crimes and slavery that were brought upon the world in the name of God by his White forefathers... "the shame of my ancestry/forever stained by blood in which you tread."

This record manages to be insightful, conscious and always funky. With Space Cowboy, Jamiroquai takes a giant step separating itself from the pack and establishing itself as a band to appreciate and from which to anticipate meaningful music.

ARTICLE #3 | The Washington Post

September 1st 1995

“Jamiroquai’s Stale Leftovers”

By Mark Jenkins

There must have been some sort of shipping mishap that led to the U.K. copies of Blood, Sweat and Tears' early albums just being unpacked last year. Snapped up by the likes of Paul Weller, these albums have inspired a new generation of British hipsters to use incredibly lame horn charts. With its new "The Return of the Space Cowboy," Jamiroquai joins the crowd; the brass flourishes of its pontificating "The Kids" are pure "Spinning Wheel."

As the album's title indicates, this London quintet borrows from other late '60s and '70s sources.

"Space Cowboy" lifts Steve Miller's old handle, "Stillness In Time" pillages Stevie Wonder, and tracks like "Manifest Destiny" and "Mr. Moon" recycle stale funk and jazz.

Add vague Utopian politics and some marijuana mysticism "I got that cheeba cheeba kinda space cowboy vibe," announces frontman Jay Kay- and the result is one of 1995's least digestible servings of leftovers.

In Britain, notorious for its short pop-music memory, Jamiroquai is a sensation; over here, it sounds like some old hippie band that peaked 25 years ago as an opening act at Fillmore West.

ARTICLE #4 | Boston Globe
June 15th 1995
"The Return Of The Space Cowboy"
By Ken Capobianco

Jamiroquai's breezy debut barely registered a blip on the pop screen last year, but this followup proves that along with Seal, Des'ree and Omar, the band is a major player in the Brit neo-soul movement. The grooves here are pure silk and mighty easy on the ears. If anything gums up the works, it's that the disk is a bit too ambitious, covering too much ground, and that band brainchild Jay K is a slave to his sources. Indeed, there's plenty of Sly, Stevie and Mayfield evident in the songwriting and arrangements, but there's enough original energy and vital grooves to forgive the footnotes. There are some good solid funk workouts like "Light Years" and "The Kids" as well as tasty jams that take their sweet time to unravel and seduce. Unfortunately, the lyrics tend to be the banal, New Age, "the planet is ours" psychobabble, and it makes you think the cowboy's spending too much time in space. But the grooves speak more eloquently, and they breathe life into this.

ARTICLE #5 | Atlanta Constitution
April 22nd 1995
"The Return Of The Space Cowboy"
By Sonia Murray

The tag "blue-eyed soul" has been stapled on vocalists ranging from Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones to Mick Hucknall of Simply Red. Mostly because their voices elicit a heavy blues/soul influence that's often unexpected from those who- without getting too racial here- have blue eyes.

It's not very often, however, that this label speaks to the feel of the music as well as the delivery of the tune. Which makes Jamiroquai's skillful combination of both an unexpected treat.

The soul this London-based band conjures up puts most of today's urban contemporary acts to shame. Drawing from obvious admiration of Stevie Wonder, Earth, Wind and Fire and whoever else can stretch beyond the usual verse/chorus/verse to make musical statements, vocalist Jason Kay and his even more stellar musicians remind us that you don't have to sample an Isaac Hayes record to have hot-battered '70s soul.

Blissfully ignorant of the lowbrow material that's in demand today, Jamiroquai challenges our numb response to violence, the lure of material trappings, even "the shame of [his] ancestry" with a spirit so unencumbered and personal that these searing messages feel like engaging talks over coffee.

So caught up in the acid jazz backdrop, it seems, many of the horn-powered tunes stretch beyond the usual three or four minutes, twisting, turning and reshaping themselves into glorious affirmations of spontaneity. Jamiroquai takes chances. And though it doesn't always win- like when low-key Kay strains into fervent rap- this sophomore effort still soars.

ARTICLE #6 | Rolling Stone
March 23rd 1995
"The Return Of The Space Cowboy"
By Paul Evans

A freaky white frontman tripping on star power. A salt-'n'-pepper Brit combo copping licks from '70s state side R&B.; Sound like a Culture Club for the '90s? Close enough. Jason Kay is a wonderfully nimble singer with a Stevie Wonder jones, and Jamiroquai parlay jazzy soul pop so tight, it crackles. Trailing clouds of hype, they dazzle on The Return of the Space Cowboy, proving that tons of swagger and a gift for irresistible hooks need not daunt the open-minded. Let cynics wince at the up-with-people spirit of "The Kids," the astromysticism of "Mr. Moon," the protest politics of "Manifest Destiny." Nowadays, when most funk comes out of cans, Jamiroquai's live spark glows. And any band that can recall both Roberta Flack and Weather Report is something else.

ARTICLE #7 | Entertainment Weekly
March 10th 1995
"The Return Of The Space Cowboy"
By Josef Woodard

As further validation that the '70s weren't as awful as we thought, Jamiroquai nestles up to the art-soul influences of Sly Stone, Rufus, and others. The Fender Rhodes is back with a sweet vengeance, as are syncopated grooves and horn-lined rifts played by humans, not samplers. No idle nostalgia broker, Jamiroquai is a funk-making machine with a bright future in the past.

ARTICLE #8 | The Jerusalem Post
November 29th 1994
"The Return Of The Space Cowboy"

Jamiroquai are no middle-aged American eagles.

These young bucks from Britain are a mix of marketing savvy, cross-racial musical sophistication and clearly stated idealism who may demonstrate the path to 21st-century survival.

*Their second jazz funk album **The Return of the Space Cowboy** is much more interesting than the title song or its mildly engaging video, which features skinny, white front man Kay jumping around in a big hat.*

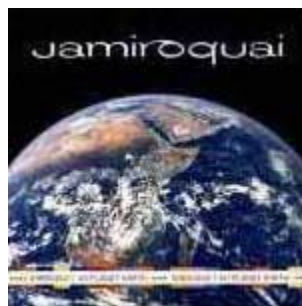
Kay is not just a Stevie Wonder wannabe, and his buddies are not just opportunists who've latched onto the perk of an eight-album deal with Sony Records. They are Musicians, with a capital M.

Twenty-four-year-old Kay is even a second-generation musician, son of a jazz-singer mother. His lyrics to songs like the tale of the dumb, gun-toting 17-year-old in "Just Another Story" mince no words. He is equally good on adoring love songs like "Morning Glory." However, he can also be somewhat vapid as in his commercially pleasing performance on "Space Cowboy."

But what always stands out is the music, a rich synthesis of sound that blissfully incorporates instruments like the Aboriginal didgeridoo with jazz and funk. It's true the album is uneven - Latin numbers like "Half the Man" sound a bit anemic. But when Jamiroquai come into focus as on "Light Years" or "Scam" they can really take you away.

If their next album can match this pace, they may begin to create a new musical language.

SUB-SECTION #6 **"Emergency On Planet Earth - Single" Review**



ARTICLE #1 | Billboard
May 28th 1994
"Emergency On Planet Earth (Single)"
By Larry Flick

U.K. acid jazz/funk act is given a second shot at stateside acceptance with this house-fried throwdown. Remixer Danny Tenaglia lays a crafty groove beneath the song that will work for discerning DJs, but maintains the integrity of the song and vocal. At a time when post-production seems to mean tossing out the entire track and starting all over, this is a nice change of pace. Deserves a shot.

SUB-SECTION #7

“Emergency On Planet Earth - Album” Reviews



ARTICLE #1 | Cineman Music Reviews

April 4th 1994

“Emergency On Planet Earth”

From England; they, too, mine the past; in this case, the world of blue; yed soul. Distinctively '60s-sounding, their vocalist comes over like a cross between Stevies Wonder and Winwood, and fronts a band that includes large horn and sometimes string sections. The record begins nicely, with a couple of beautifully composed tunes and a rich, brassy sound. As it plays through, however, they rely more and more on basic funk as their inventiveness slowly winds down, which is unfortunate. By the time they get to the 10 minute pluss "Revolution 1993," it's almost pure grind. Perhaps, future releases will offer more of the complexity this starts off with, because Jamiroquai have something to offer, and they play with punch.

ARTICLE #2 | International Herald Tribune

November 10th 1993

“Jamiroquai: Will Wonders Never Cease?”

By Mike Zwerin

Jason Kay, a/k/a Jamiroquai, takes his stage name from jam (as in session) and the American Indian tribe. He wears an oversized fur hat that looks ponderously nativesomething, under which, it is said, this 22-year-old British rock star for the 1990s has real hair.

It is also said that he bristles when compared to Stevie Wonder. Imitating genius is bristly business. If you do not want to be compared to Stevie Wonder don't name one of your tunes "Music of the Mind" and sing too-Wonderful-to-be-accidental licks and textures on top of a synthesized soul beat.

Son of the jazz singer Karen Kay, Jamiroquai was signed to an eight-album deal by [Sony Music](#) last year after just one hit single, "When You Gonna Learn?" With his first CD "Emergency on Planet Earth" edging up to sales of a million worldwide (not counting the United States, a market currently being cultivated by way of in-crowd promo concerts), he can bristle all the way to the bank.

This is a rare treasure, contemporary pop music with mass potential worth a detour. It will, to quote the shamelessly retro title of his song, "Blow Your Mind." Stevie's back, plus the latest technology to boot. No complaints. Just try to ignore the ecological kid stuff.

"Whatever happened to Robin Hood?" he asks, suggesting we give our money to Greenpeace and Oxfam- he claims that 7 percent of his merchandising income goes to Friends of the Earth- instead of to the government "for charming buffet lunches with equally useless puppets from some other country."

How about giving it to Sony Music to finance that eight-album contract? Eight-count-'em-eight. You ask yourself. Is it smarts or desperation? That's like an eight-year contract to a rookie quarterback. How do they even know he's got two seasons in him? Is Sony insured for blown minds, tinnitus and writers block? Remember Terence Trent Darby?

In addition to the album's successful catchy single (and video clip) "Too Young to Die," track nine with the stubbornly innocent title "Revolution 1993" leads us to believe otherwise.

Technology and pop music have rarely been combined so benevolently. The intensity builds for over 10 minutes. It's an ambitious, complex cauldron with crisscrossed ascending and descending lines, James Brown-like brass punches, a female rhythm-and-blues choir, Mitch Mitchellesque drums, African percussion, up-front funk bass and elements of hip hop, fusion, acid jazz, technopop and raga miffin. His rap ("That revolution is the only way we can change things- I wanna fight the power") swings so hard you can ignore the cliches he's mouthing as it weaves through the mix.

You've never heard anything like it- except for Stevie Wonder.

**ARTICLE #3 | The Washington Post
October 29th 1993
"Soul Minus Soul"
By Mark Jenkins**

"Everybody dance to the music" may not be a startling injunction, but it's about as serious a sentiment as the frothy, jazzy neo-soul of Jamiroquai can credibly deliver. The quintet, a commercial sensation and a critical laughing stock back in its native London, attempts to comment on war ("Too Young to Die") and social change (the 10-minute "Revolution 1993") on its "Emergency on Planet Earth," but the sloganeering is as crude as the music is slick.

Frontman Jay Kay named his band after the Iroquois tribe, whom he sees as prescient ecological exemplars, and imagines himself as anarchist: "The kids want the system breaking down/Not higher education/If it ain't no natural law/Then you can keep your regulations," he sings in "If I Like It, I Do It." The music of songs like "When You Gonna Learn (Digeridoo)" is highly regulated, though. Derived from the lush, silky '70s funk and soul of Philadelphia International and Stevie Wonder (who's clearly Kay's vocal model), Jamiroquai's sound is about as revolutionary as a nonreturnable bottle of Pepsi.

**ARTICLE #4 | The San Francisco Chronicle
August 29th 1993
“Emergency On Planet Earth”**

Flashing back on the early sounds of Stevie Wonder, with a taste of Gil Scott Heron thrown in for good measure, British singer-songwriter Jason Kay sets his sights on revitalizing '70s silken soul for contemporary ears. Not the real thing, but it's a remarkable simulation.

**ARTICLE #5 | Sunday Times
June 18th 1993
“Emergency On Planet Earth”**

At last, a British soul record that cuts through the arty guff that has held back all those acts on the Talkin' Loud label (Omar, the Young Disciples, Galliano, et al) and gets to the heart of the matter.

Jamiroquai, the West London band fronted by Jason Kay, have recorded a debut which combines youthful brio with musicianship of the very highest order. And, so long as one takes the absurdly earnest, politically correct tone of the lyrics with a sizable pinch of salt, it's a lot of fun too.

As is often the case, the 22-year-old Kay is far less self-conscious about raiding the archives for ideas than are those acts who were around at the time. Maybe he does sound a tad like Stevie Wonder, but Wonder has not recorded anything remotely as good as the high-kicking funk of 'Hooked Up' or the instrumental Latin fusion workout of 'Music of the Mind' for ten years at least. And he didn't use a didgeridoo either.

**ARTICLE #6 | The Independent
June 17th 1993
“Emergency On Planet Earth”**

He's young, he's cute, he's a great dancer, and he wears a big furry hat: in short, he's a star, which is why Sony has signed Jason Kaye [sic] (aka Jamiroquai) to the kind of eight-album deal unheard of in these times of fiscal stringency. With two hit singles already, they must be well pleased with their investment- though if he's to reach the end of that deal, Kaye would do well to invest in a record collection that goes beyond the strict confines of early Seventies soul and jazz-funk, particularly Stevie Wonder; there's even a track here called 'Music of the Mind,' an instrumental that's almost as vacuous as the average Bob James number.

**ARTICLE #7 | The Daily Telegraph
June 17th 1993**

“Emergency On Planet Earth”

Jamiroquai are the funkier thing this side of James Brown's underpants. Their influences are obvious to anyone over the age of 30- imagine the voices of Gil Scott-Heron and Stevie Wonder meeting the sensibility of Marvin Gaye circa his eco-consciousness masterpiece What's Going On? and you are getting very warm indeed. There is an excitement and passion about Emergency on Planet Earth that will appeal to incipient wrinklies as well as teens and twentysomethings.

This is a remarkable record because Jamiroquai take every cliché in the soul handbook and somehow turn it into a thing of beauty. JK (the band's main man, the cat who always wears a hat) calls women "sexy ladies" and says things like "you blow my mind" and "no more wars," yet somehow these stale sentiments are rendered fresh and fragrant and really rather wonderful. And, apart from the obvious influences, there are dazzling flashes of inspiration and innovation. Check out the gorgeous strings on Too Young to Die or the rogue didgeridoo on When You Gonna Learn. Rolf Harris will never be the same again. If you think you have heard it all before, think again. Think Jamiroquai.

SUB-SECTION #8

“When You Gonna Learn? - Single” Reviews



ARTICLE #1 | The Straits Times August 15th 1993 “When You Gonna Learn?”

If you need to reach out to the young, without turning them off, play them When You Gonna Learn and Too Young to Die. There's angry talk in these but the music is a party-happy brew of soul and funk, a la Simply Red.

SECTION #2 PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

**LIVE REVIEW #1 | Time Out
Battersea Power Station | London, U.K.
December 14th 1997
Time Out**

As perennially popular on the live stage as ever - and deservedly so - Jay Kay's settled into an excellent jazz funk niche. Expect a spirited and hugely danceable performance from the Space cowboy and his able sidekicks, from the still-strong early '90s numbers, such as 'Too Young to Die', to smartly catchy new single 'High Times'. This show is a special benefit in aid of the endangered species charity Tusk Force, and the Marcia Lewes campaign (to support the child murder victim Lewes).

**LIVE REVIEW #2 | VIBE TV
Los Angeles, California USA
November 21st 1997
"Jamiroquai" By Sinbad
VIBE TV Online Library**

Jamiroquai. See, there are times when I wish I was living in England. I'm deep into some UK soul. However, I ain't deep into some cold ass weather. Jamiroquai sounds just fine on my CD player in Los Angeles. Naw, one day I will check out the scene out there. But you cannot deny that these guys are feeling something when they cut their records. I mean, minus a few black Renaissance acts, US R & B is so dead. Without imports...we would forget that sometimes songs can have just music toward the end...and the chords actually change a little too.

**LIVE REVIEW #3 | Universal Amphitheatre
Los Angeles, California USA
November 19th 1997
"Jamiroquai Funk It Up" By Jennifer Clay
Variety**

Although Jason (Jay) Kay apologized at one point for being exhausted, explaining this was the last night of Jamiroquai's U.S. tour, there was nary a sign of inertia during the English band's nearly two-hour set.

Kay danced about the stage like a rag doll with jerky acrobatic movements -- leaping, twirling and sliding on his knees, performing flips and handstands, and conducting with his arms and shaking his

hips -- seemingly off in his own world. While main songwriter-vocalist Kay is the focal point, it's apparent Jamiroquai is more than a one-man band.

A unique concoction, Jamiroquai blends R&B; soul, funk, hip hop and world beats; its first two albums (Emergency on Planet Earth and The Return of the Space Cowboy) lean heavy on the smooth and mellow R&B; the 1996 release "Travelling Through Space" digs an upbeat groove into funk. Live, the combination of the two styles translated into a flowing ride.

On the smooth side were the very-adult sounding Mr. Moon and the tripping Space Cowboy (about the right to smoke marijuana), the latter of which featured Kay's human breath beat box (yoga-like exhales into the microphone). Up-tempo hits included Virtual Insanity, Cosmic Girl and a surprise cover of Kool & the Gang's 1974 single Hollywood Swinging. On instrumentals Didjerama and Didjital Vibrations, Kay gives way at center stage to the unique sounds created by Wallis Buchanan on the didjeridoo and standout bassist Stuart Zender.

**LIVE REVIEW #4 | International Ballroom
Atlanta, Georgia USA
October 4th 1997
"Peach Buzz: Insanity Contained" By Richard L. Eldredge
The Atlanta Journal & Constitution**

The International Ballroom, in these post-Master P times, proved to be quite a different concert venue Saturday night for the Jamiroquai show. At first, parking wasn't allowed next to the Doraville site. Free shuttle buses were provided for those who were then forced to park farther down New Peachtree Road. And once the exceptional two-hour show from the acid jazz band was over, the police had erected a blockade of cruisers to funnel traffic out. All since the Sept. 4 concert headlined by New Orleans-based rapper-entrepreneur P (Percy Miller). That concert was canceled after non-ticketholders broke into a side entrance and tear gas was used by the police to control the crowd. Fights and shootings reportedly ensued. "I don't know if I'm supposed to feel safe or like I'm in a police state," 26-year-old Terrell Harris of Dunwoody remarked after the Jamiroquai performance.

**LIVE REVIEW #5 | Harborlights
Boston, Massachusetts USA
June 2nd 1997
"London's Jamiroquai Survives Early-Set Funk" By Clea Simon
The Boston Globe**

As timely as bell-bottoms, and as dated, London's Jamiroquai has captured the hearts and feet of hip young clubgoers, and despite a slow start, the band translated its pop-funk ear candy to a nearly full Harborlights Monday night.

Think Kool & the Gang. Think Average White Band, and you'll understand the appeal of Jamiroquai, an 11-member group that updates the dance music of the 70's with polyrhythms, ancient instruments, and ecologically correct lyrics. Led by the diminutive, energetic Jason Kay, Jamiroquai opened the final night of its summer US tour in the chill open-air pavilion by praising the sunset; and the neo-hippie vibes continued, with grooves that circled aimlessly through the first four overlong numbers. Blame the band's size, in part, for the early numbers' disconnected feeling, as in songs like "Too Young To Die" (off the band's first, 1993 CD) in which the three piece brass section seemed to strike out on its own, virtually leaving the snap-and-pop bass and guitar in another tune. Sometimes the ensemble just

sounded as if it was trying to bring too many sounds into the mix: In the pro-pot "Space Cowboy" (off 1994's "The Return of the Space Cowboy") a fruity flute solo was as misplaced as a tacky movie soundtrack in what should have been a clublike atmosphere.

Either the vibe or the band warmed up soon after, though, and as the 90-minute plus show neared its halfway point (with "Mr. Moon") Kay gained control of his band. With a voice - and vocal phrasings - that sound uncannily like Stevie Wonder's, Kay makes an arresting frontman. Dancing around like the former Prince, he captured the eye and ear, as he swung, Wonder-style, from soul croon to sexy caterwaul with ease.

It took a non-vocal number, however, to really reset the pinds. "Didjital Vibrations," essentially a solo on the yiddaki (didjeridoo) by Wallis Buchanan, seemed to center the band, and perhaps sthe crowd, as well, giving everyone a break from the syncopated frenzy. The number started slow, but as the long, low booming of this Aboriginal instrument built, keyboard tinkles and chimes began to play against it. From another millennium, the space-age swoops of the synthesizer and, soon after, the rhythm section's renewed funk urged Buchanan into his own harmonic convergence.

From that point on, the bank picked up the pieces - bouncing and popping in tight fund format behind Kay's seductive voice. Focusing on tunes from the band's third and latest (and most successful) CD, "Travelling Without Moving," Jamiroquai brought summer in early. "Cosmic Girl" percolated as a frothy dance hit should, and "Use the Force" played up Kay's Wonder-like mannerisms, matching the now reined-in brass section note for note in sass. By the time the band hit the obligatory tribute - Kool & the Gang's "Hollywood Swinging" - it mattered little that nothing in the mix was original. The beat was strong, the sky purple, and this summer's sound cocktail in the blender.

**LIVE REVIEW #6 | Wembley Stadium
London, England U.K.
April 21st 1997
"Cool Prat In A Hat" By Tobias Hill
The Daily Telegraph**

Seven o'clock, and in the Wembley Arena car-park Jay Kay is playing football with his band. The crowd peer through the iron palings like punters at the zoo, then file on towards the venue doors. You can tell it's the Jamiroquai frontman because of the flares and the hat - not the trademark fuzzy-green Mad Hatter pile, but a woolly pom-pom affair with the Ferrari logo on the front. A bit cheesy, a bit gaudy, but out having fun, Jay Kay is the embodiment of what Jamiroquai aim to be: Seventies disco funk in all its kitsch glory.

Two hours later he shimmies on to the stage in giant hat and rainbow poncho. "Hello, London! I bought this little number just for you, but it's getting a bit hot now." He strips off the poncho and wildly conducts the opening of Cosmic Girl, from the group's most recent album. Released last year, Travelling Without Moving has gone platinum so many times the record industry might as well invent a new metallic plaudit (plutonium maybe?).

The achievement is all the more remarkable because of the critical abuse heaped on Jamiroquai's first two albums, on Jay Kay himself, on his love of beautiful sports cars and aesthetically unpardonable headwear.

What becomes clear as the evening goes on is that, although Jay Kay does indeed look like a prat in a hat, his music (co-written with keyboard player Toby Smith) makes for a brilliant night out. Mixing it up with the talented didgeridoo player Wallis Buchanan, DJ D-Zire and Nigerian percussionist Sola Akingbola, Jamiroquai prove that disco isn't just for discos; the crowd bathes in the rush of feelgood funk and danceable rhythm.

"Who's got a lighter? Who's got one? Yes, yes, oh yes." The crowd twinkles with Ronsons. "Oh Gahd, you all look so pretty when you do that." And off they go with Let's Spend the Night Together, Jay Kay beanpole-thin on top of the speakers, moving like one of those dancing sunflowers. He saves Virtual Insanity for the encore, a song already immortalised in 24-hour shops, theme pubs, car ferries - it's tacky, it's catchy, and 10,000 people are enjoying it very much, thank you. On the tube back home, the couple opposite talk in hushed tones. "So there he was, knocking a ball about round the back." "Was he wearing his hat?" "Oh yeah. Great furry blue one." The headgear, like Jamiroquai, just keeps getting bigger and bigger.

**LIVE REVIEW #7 | Corn Exchange
London, England U.K.
February 22nd 1997
"Jammy Now, Rocky Later" By Nigel Williamson
The Times**

Jamiroquai are full of contradictions. They play 1970s jazz-funk grooves for a 1990s generation. They donate a percentage of their earnings to Greenpeace, but Jay Kay, their iconic leader, has a love affair with fast cars. Onstage, Kay's arch cockney vowels and ludicrous trademark titfer make him a dead ringer for the Artful Dodger in Oliver! until he begins to sing, and becomes Stevie Wonder.

Four years ago Sony signed them to an almost unprecedented eight-album deal. After the first three hugely successful instalments, it looks like an astute piece of business. The large number of teenage girls present at the Corn Exchange proved that the audience for funky, danceable disco-pop is constantly being renewed and requires its own contemporary champions. What happens next is another question, but for the moment Jamiroquai could not be riding higher.

Although the band is the size of a football team, Jamiroquai is Kay. He conducts the band with strange pointing gestures and, even during the solos, he dances irrepressibly, ensuring that he remains the sole focus of attention. At one point he says "I'm knackered", and sits down to make way for an instrumental. Within 30 seconds he is up and back in overdrive.

Fortunately, Jamiroquai are more than a retro dance act. There are strong echoes of 1970s disco, but there is a highly developed jazz groove, too, particularly from the three-strong horn section, while Wallis Buchanan's spooky, timeless didgeridoo adds its own unique texture. Melodically, Kay's songs are adventurous, and even the hit singles such as Virtual Insanity and Cosmic Girl combine catchy hooks with unexpected twists and turns.

At the start of a 13-date British tour this was a banging gig, but the nagging question is where Kay goes from here. Travelling Without Moving is the title of the current album and seems to sum up their journey so far. They get bigger and bigger without making much musical progress. There are several options. Kay might experiment with strings, or he could choose to explore a purer jazz groove. Whatever he does, at 26 time is still on his side; but the day is going to come when a fickle pop audience wonders what else he can do. And Kay had better have a good answer.

**LIVE REVIEW #8 | The Roxy
New York City, New York USA
February 3rd 1997
"Jamiroquai @ The Roxy" By Brian Larson
MTV Online**

The funk-laden, acid-jazz soul-pop of this English band seems to bridge the gap between existing subcultures and genres, appealing to a strikingly wide variety of musical tastes. Ravers, hippies, college kids, disco, retro, young, old, and, of course, the usual mix of Big Apple industry buzz-flies all lined up for Jamiroquai's second sold out night at the Roxy.

Inside the packed space, the energy level was high; a thousand eyes stared up in anticipation at the lonely drum set on an empty stage. Surprisingly few milled about or socialized, and on two occasions fans broke out chanting, imploring Jason Kay and his band to end the torturous wait.

Finally Kay emerged wearing a puffy white sweatshirt and his signature hat. Large and furry, it obscured his face in a shadow of style and mystery -- exactly the hat you would expect from a self-proclaimed space cowboy. Hands shot up across the floor, waving to and fro in synch with the budding tunes. Winding down his first song, Jay evoked cheers when he reduced the East Coast/West Coast tiff to a simple opinion: "The weed here is not as good as it is on the West Coast." Fans obediently lit up in response, and the smell of marijuana began to waft about the venue.

The show switched into high gear with the sudden plunge into "Emergency on Planet Earth," the second song of the night and title track from the first Jamiroquai record. Kay shed his sweatshirt to reveal a simple polo T-shirt, and hand waving turned to frantic dancing.

Jamiroquai pull out all the stops for a live show, boasting not only a guitar, bass, and drums, but a killer horn section made up of a trombone, trumpet, flute, and saxophone. A DJ spins records, a separate drummer eschews the sticks for a more tribal sound, and even a didgeridoo, the traditional instrument of the Australiam aborigines, Kay led the crowd through a good mix of new songs and favorites from his first two releases. His unique dancing style inspired the crowd, with sharp movements reminiscent of break dancing somehow coupled with a loose abandon that would have fit in well at a Grateful Dead show.

The only element that might have left fans disappointed was the less-than-ideal sound quality (one fan complained that he didn't even have to raise his voice to carry on a conversation twenty feet from the stage). But the energy Kay and his band created carried the show. As "Virtual Insanity," the current radio single and the last song in Jamiroquai's set, wound down with a jazzy freestyle groove, a girl in front of the stage gave Kay a red rose. It was a simple gesture, yet perfectly expressed the audience's gratitude for a truly communal vibe and a truly memorable experience.

**LIVE REVIEW #9 | Capital Ballroom
Washington, D.C. USA
February 2nd 1997
"Jamiroquai: Wonders Never Cease" By Holly Bass
The Washington Post**

Jamiroquai's concert at the Capitol Ballroom on Sunday night was a jampacked dance party. Many in

the sellout crowd could have had only vague memories, if any, of the vintage Stevie Wonder and jazz fusion that Jamiroquai draws heavily from, but it didn't stop them from feeling the groove.

Lead singer Jason Kay walked onstage wearing one of the signature oversize hats he designs himself. The environment and marijuana legalization were prominent themes of the evening. Songs such as "Emergency on Planet Earth" and "High Times" put the crowd in a positive state of mind. The 1995 smash "Space Cowboy" showed no signs of wear, with solid grooves held down by a tight horn section. "Cosmic Girl" got the crowd swinging and put smiles on female faces. A highlight of the show was Jamiroquai's cover of Kool and the Gang's "Hollywood Swinging," proving that the old stuff really is the best.

"Didjerama," a more innovative tune, featured Wallis Buchanan's funk stylings on the didgeridoo. When joined by percussionist Sola [Akingbola], playing a double-headed bata drum for Nigeria, the combination proved infectious. The title track from Jamiroquai's newest album, "Travelling Without Moving," turned up the heat with its faster tempo and grinding bass line. The band performed "Stillness in Time" as an encore, punching up its lovely melody with a subtle bossa nova rhythm. The crowd joined in on the chorus of "la, la, la's," and despite the title, few stood still as the concert wound down at the stroke of 12.

**LIVE REVIEW #10 | Warehouse
Toronto, Canada
January 30th 1997
"Budding Acid Jazz" By Vivien Cheng
University Of Western Ontario Gazette**

If Jason Kay, frontman of Jamiroquai, ever had to choose to be anyone's disciple, he chose the right person. Performing last week with his usual five-piece band and some fellow guests, Jamiroquai sparked an energetic mix of disco and funk influences that bear striking resemblance to the music of a young Stevie Wonder. The group, which has been labeled one of the forerunners of mainstream acid jazz, sold out its show in a matter of days.

Decked out in his signature attire consisting of a foot-high hat and a blue windbreaker, Kay opened the set by declaring that the crowd was a "lovely lot." One couldn't help but wonder if this was because of the anecdote he later told about a Joe Blow's attempt to offer him "quite a nice bag of buds." The spotlight was on Kay all night as he demonstrated his body's agile elasticity despite being a self-described small man hence the hat so that his avid dance moves made up for the rest of the band's lack of excitement. Perhaps they had taken up Joe Blow's offer. . .

The majority of the set consisted of tracks off Jamiroquai's latest album, Traveling Without Moving. Other tracks played included "Space Cowboy" and "Emergency on Planet Earth," which reached the top of British charts in June 1993, shortly after the band had formed. The highlight of the evening was a memorable rendition of "Cosmic Girl" mixed up with some African rhythms, beats and sounds of a didgeridoo.

Jamiroquai is one of the few bands that has transcended the underground club scene to emerge on stage as a live band and it seems their fans just can't get enough. The night ended with an encore and an after-party conveniently held at The Government next door where Jamiroquai mingled with its fans.

**LIVE REVIEW #11 | Warehouse
Toronto, Canada
January 30th 1997
“Fine Acid Jazz Trip: Jamiroquai Put On A Great Party” By Kieran
Grant
The Toronto Sun**

Strange though it may seem, there was a time when bands played with the sole-- or soul-- intention of shakin' your booty.



With that in mind, Jamiroquai can be forgiven for putting on a show that was more dance party than concert spectacle Thursday night at a sold-out Warehouse.

The British acid jazz outfit kept the lights up, the vibes good, and the grooves flawless for the hour-and-a-half set. That was good news for the nearly 2,000 stylin' fans who packed the room to see them.

Jamiroquai are the most financially successful band to emerge from the acid jazz movement. Their upbeat fusion of funk, soul and pop extends beyond usual concertgoers and draws the hard-to-reach dance club crowd to their live shows.

The group's popularity may have even delayed the show. Kids were still wedging into the club minutes after the 10 p.m. start time. Many fans showed up without tickets. Scalpers were asking \$180 each.

Typical rock concert anarchy, sure.

But inside, nary an eyelash was batted as lead-singer Jay Kay and his rather dubiously-named 10-piece band-- Jamiroquai fuses the Englishman's own name with that of the native Canadian Iroquois Nation, get it?-- slid through grooves from their new CD Travelling Without Moving, 1994's Return of the Space Cowboy, and 1993's Emergency on Planet Earth. The punters were too busy getting down.

The magic was lost in the hollow-sounding corners of the club. From that vantage point and listening post, the party wasn't so inviting. Intimacy just doesn't work in the Warehouse.

Kay and company don't deserved to be upstaged, whether by bad acoustics or unnecessary visuals.

While his reputation for singing exactly like Stevie Wonder precedes him, Kay is talented enough to deliver the goods.

Dwarfed by one of his trademark fun-fur hats, he sang fluidly over the slick work of bassist Stuart Zender, drummer Derrick McKenzie, guitarist Simon Katz, and keyboardist Toby Smith.

The band never put a sneaker in the wrong place.

Their crisp studio approach was fleshed out by a horn section, a DJ with turntables and extra percussion.

Didgeridoo player and general groover Wallis Buchanan added some spontaneity, jamming on tunes like Didjerama.

But while album-perfect versions of Virtual Insanity, Cosmic Girl, Alright, and Travelling Without Moving showed off Jamiroquai's hot musicianship, their hinted-at knack for expanding on Kay's songs was left out in the cold.

Still, with few solos and no obvious ego trips, the band knew how to complement the singer's casual wailing.

Good taste is a big part of great playing.

**LIVE REVIEW #12 | The Riviera
Chicago, Illinois USA
January 29th 1997**

"Jamiroquai Takes Mellow Brick Road" By Teresa Wiltz

Chicago Tribune

Acid jazz singers are usually an anonymous lot, spinning lazy grooves as they worship at the altar of the laid-back funkiness of the mid-to-late '70s, their music finding homes in endless compilation CDs.

This is not the case with Jamiroquai, the wildly popular, British neo-soul quintet, which played to a sold-out house of fervent, spliff-smoking, multi-culti fans Wednesday night at the Riviera.

Its leader, singer Jason Kay, the son of a British jazz singer and an absentee Portuguese father, has become a controversial superstar back home in England where local newspapers reported that the 27-year-old thought he was better than Stevie Wonder-- a boast he denies making.

Kay, in an oversized navy polo shirt, black jeans, suede sneakers and a giant Cossack faux fur hat that obscured all but his scraggly goatee and ponytail, was the agitated ringleader.

One moment he was playing the conductor with jerky arm movements, the next he was dancing a goofy little dance that looked like a cross between an Irish jig and the Running Man, high-fiving audience members and autographing album covers-- a soul ambassador bringing American R&B; back home.

Jamiroquai (a combination of "Jam" and "Iroquois" after the Native American tribe that Kay admires) is a quintet comprised of Kay, Toby Smith (keyboards), Stuart Zender (bass), Derrick McKenzie (drums), Simon Katz (guitar) and Wallis Buchanan (didgeridoo).

For the concert tour, the band brought along a brass section, along with the agile Sola Akingbola on percussion and Darren Galea [aka D-Zire] scratching out onstage samples from his DJ table.

They made a tight ensemble, a band in the true '70s sense, a time when bands were bands and singers were Stevie Wonder, flowing from one song to the next, pounding out rhythms that hinted both of Africa and disco-mirrored glass balls from "Saturday Night Fever."

Kay rode the Earth, Wind and Fire wave, singing of love, peace and happiness and extolling the virtues of "Cosmic Girls," cheeba (marijuana) and "interplanetary good time vibes" [sic] from the band's three CDs, "Emergency on Planet Earth," "The Return of the Space Cowboy," and the latest release, "Travelling Without Moving."

Kay even took on Kool and the Gang as the band pounded out a funky '90s version of "Hollywood Swinger," [sic] complete with sampled riffs of the original cut.

The vibe was groovy, the music smooth as buttah. But after a while, the mellowness became murky, one song morphing virtually undistinguished into the next, the larger-than-life sounds drowning out Kay's soulful vocals, which were sounding frail and raggedy by the end of the night.

**LIVE REVIEW #13 | Bimbo's
San Francisco, California USA
January 27th 1997
"Is It Live?" By Victor Haseman
SF Weekly**

I hate grandstanders who don't deliver. You know the type: the band leader who's a little too flamboyant

*for his own good given his contributions to whatever it is about the band that gets the fans and the critics in heat. With an artist like that, it's all fun and games, until he has to perform live. Jay Kay, generally accepted as the mastermind behind Jamiroquai, is a grandstander. I suspected him right after reading the liner notes to *Emergency on Planet Earth*, the full album that introduced the British band to American acid-jazz fans. It was one of those stream-of-consciousness numbers about the world going to hell in a handbasket at the speed of light; way too precocious to take seriously, and far too indulgent to be representative of the band's principal musicians: Stuart Zender on bass, Toby Smith on keyboards, Wallis Buchanan on didgeridoo, Derrick McKenzie on drums.*

*Oh yeah, Kay was suspect. But the music and lyrics on the disc were thoughtful, imaginatively arranged, and better executed than most of what was passing for nouveau jazz in the States at the time. And then there were the endorsements from Brand New Heavies' Andrew Levy and Simon Bartholomew, both of whom contributed to the recording. But with or without the BNH seal of approval, on *Emergency*, Jamiroquai had managed a tremendously successful synthesis of James Brown-inspired horn riffs, in-the-pocket rhythms, turntable techniques, and golden-toned vocals that referenced the black soul traditions of the '70s and early '80s. If the band wasn't English and mostly white, you'd have thought Black Power music à la War, the Isley Brothers, and Earth, Wind & Fire had suddenly fallen back into vogue. Adding to the revolutionary energy of *Emergency* were simple but affecting lyrics about empowerment, introspection, and change. It's supposed to remind us of the artists who did it first and best-- the Last Poets, Gil Scott Heron, James Brown, Sly Stone-- but works just as well for listeners who missed the musical revolution the first time around.*

*Return of the Space Cowboy and Travelling Without Moving, the two albums that followed *Emergency*, are successful, but less earth-shattering. *Cowboy*, released a year after Jamiroquai's debut in 1993, experiments more with the tropes of psychedelia and the cosmos, as if Kay (and the band) had grown a little weary of looking at the Earth from the ground. And *Travelling*, released at the end of '96, continues the journey "out there." Only this time, the "out there" that Jay (and the band) seemed most preoccupied with was cyberspace. To be completely honest, if Jamiroquai had turned up Jan. 27 and only played numbers from the latest, *Travelling Without Moving*, the crowd at Bimbo's 365 Club would probably have been just as satisfied. But Jay and company performed a 14-tune set that wound back and forth over the three albums. And Jay, as I feared, grandstanded his way through the entire affair, tossing off his English accent for a believable hillbilly drawl, pitching fruit into the audience during the encore, and shimmying his near-rhythmless corduroy-covered behind all around the stage. He's the voice of Jamiroquai and the band's personality, too. Which was too bad, because the rest of the gang on stage-- in total, a nine-piece band that included a West African percussionist and an incredible horn section-- were the glue that held the night together.*

*Still, song after song, Jamiroquai as a unit put its heart into pleasing the crowd. The set opened appropriately with the now classic "Hooked Up." "I'm so glad I got ya hooked up on my drug/ Everybody dance to the music," Kay crooned. It was a sly wink to the fact that the show sold out weeks before, and that a sizable crowd outside Bimbo's had been turned away. The rendition was tight-- almost too tight. Even while gyrating around the stage, Kay and the band weren't so much performing as parroting the original album recording. After jamming through versions of "Emergency on Planet Earth" (the single, not the album), "Return of the Space Cowboy" (likewise), and the second track off of *Travelling*, "Cosmic Girl" Buchanan took center stage with his didgeridoo (an aboriginal instrument also known as a Yiddaki), launching into an eerie, five minute solo. If you've never heard a Yiddaki, there's no easy way to describe it. Imagine a hollowed tree limb about the size of a bassoon. If you have the lung capacity to push air through it, you can approximate the sound of a foghorn pretty easily. Buchanan can make it do even weirder things, and patched into Bimbo's sound system, he was able to fill the entire performance space with the deep, organically derived bass.*

Buchanan's contribution alone could have stood as a separate performance. But positioned at the midway point of the set, it served more as a reminder that what we were seeing the least from Jamiroquai as a unit was flexibility, experimentation, and improvisation. These guys came to play a set of music that would hit not because of what they

had done that night, but because their fans knew most if not all of the songs - right down to the breaks. I like a good cover as much as the next guy, but let's not forget about the spontaneity of performance.

**LIVE REVIEW #14 | House Of Blues
Los Angeles, California USA
January 26th 1997
"Jamiroquai: House Of Blues" By Darryl Morden
The Hollywood Reporter**

Jamiroquai's Jay Kay is a prince of positive vibration and proved to be more showman than shaman as he hosted a stone-souled, funky, world-beat party before a full-house. Since their 1993 debut, the British soul band- "Jam" as in jamming and "Iroquai" as in the Native American Iroquois tribe [how many times do we have to have this explained to us?!?!? -K.R.]-- has been the danceable toast of Europe. More recently they've broken through in Asia with the hit "Virtual Insanity" from their third album, "Travelling Without Moving," released in the United States by the Work/Sony label. Now they're traveling through the States, hoping to move the masses here, building on their base of clubgoers and Anglophiles as well as word-of-mouth. If this energy-laden performance is any indication, the group should score. Kay has a serious Stevie Wonder jones vocally, and that's not a bad thing at all. He skipped along over the bubbly rhythms, the five-man outfit augmented by extra percussion and a punchy horn section of trombone, sax and trumpet along with occasionally jazzy flute. In addition to early 1970s Wonder, the lively outfit summoned the spirits of James Brown, Sly Stone and George Clinton, mixing thumpy disco, reggae dub and Afro-Cuban beats for a frothy, fresh-sounding brew. The upbeat set featured the current single "Cosmic Girl" and older numbers the core crowd seemed to know, such as "Emergency on Planet Earth" and "Space Cowboy," from the first two albums. For most of the show, the packed dance floor and throng gathered toward the rear bar was in a state of gyration, Kay calling out phrases with loud audience response. He occasionally broke into seizure dances of joy. While he also attempted subtle, well-meaning social commentary in several songs, it was Jamiroquai's uplifting, infectious music that delivered.

**LIVE REVIEW #15 | Forum
London, England U.K.
November 10th-11th 1996
"Special K" By Andy Crysell
NME**



They're pouring into the Forum in droves, ready to transform every aisle, staircase and bar space into a makeshift dancefloor. But then, just who are these folk who worship him of The Big Hat, eh?

Take a look around and you discover they're as open-ended a bunch as you'll see at any gig, with every disparate tribe of this man of manifold hits being represented. Down the front, why, there's the pseudo-crusties and budding eco-warriors, the funk-loving students and still-shattered-from-the-night-before clubbers, who love his reverence towards more underground soul music and the well-attired hedonism of it all.

Up on the balcony, meanwhile, you enter the realm of the girls-night-out and the married couple, all searching, even on a Sunday, for a simple, uncomplicated, office Christmas party-shaped affair that, for once, doesn't require the wearing of silly headgear by anyone other than the ringmaster himself. That'll be more self-indulgence, then, thus underlining that these people are different, but not that different.

Resplendent in pink, Jason Kay knows this well and, moreover, knows he's just the hyperactive mass of tricky stage moves, soaring vocals and dizzy, easy-on-the-mind sentiments to fulfil their wishes tenfold. He apologises for having had shingles recently - for having cancelled a number of gigs - and then, as if set on proving to a doctor who's watching from the wings that he's feeling a lot better now, ta, rips into Hooked Up, the show's opener, with glittering zeal and energy in abundance. And hey, why amble across the stage, when you can skate, shuffle, hop, skip, leap, moonwalk and do the funky chicken several times over? In Kay's mind, there's just no contest.



Come Emergency On Planet Earth and Space Cowboy as his zillion-piece band loop the veritable loop, bounding through highs, lows and breakdowns, he's at his zenith, bringing a sometimes you have to (Stevie) wonder how such a voice comes from one so gangly - Samson had the hair but Kay...uh-huh, he has that magic fluffy hat, obviously.

Even the jazzhead faffing around that constitutes the beginning, close and, invariably, middle of every Jamiroquai number is bearable tonight. And the wang of the phonky bass? Really, that's not so bad, either. His subject matter never gets far beyond the freeing of minds, the spending of nights together and that expansive cartoon space-soul fixation of his, yet they're delivered impeccably, with Kay seeing fit to dance like he's plugged into the mains as he blasts through the suitably fizzing chorus of Cosmic Girl.

And then, less suitably, it's time for a six-minute didgeridoo break, which briefly disunites the tribes of Kay - with the urban young 'uns nodding knowingly, while them upstairs wish they could have their party back, please. And you can't blame them, really.

Soon enough, they do, with a picture of Kay's beloved Ferrari appearing on the backdrop and the larger-than-life likes of Travelling Without Moving and Virtual Insanity resembling three decades of black music repackaged with consumer friendliness high on the list of priorities. Which would probably be a bad thing, if only it wasn't such an uproarious, life-affirming thing.

He encores with a house-up, blanded-out reappraisal of Cosmic Girl that's as contemporary as his show gets tonight but, ironically, is its least appealing moment, too; one where the curse of 'the jam' finally makes its presence all too keenly felt.

But his disciples simply recognise it as the last grand turn of the evening, with Jay having proven himself an entertainer in the true sense of the word. After all, he'd no doubt be just as at home guesting on the Royal Variety Show as charming a festival crowd, and that, surely, speaks volumes of his place in pop.

The people have spoken, then. They have screamed, cheered and soundly frugged their feet off, too. And, unquestionably, he's their choice...

LIVE REVIEW #16 | Forum

**London, England U.K.
November 10th-11th 1996
"It's That Easy Listening, Ealing Feeling" By Max Bell
The Evening Standard**

Jason Kay's London based jazz-funk outfit Jamiroquai may not be flavour of the month with the mainstream music press, but their simple, upbeat grooves remain suprisingly popular with the club crowd. Despite Sundays being traditionally dead on the circuit, the posses were out in force, from Croydon to Muswell Hill.

Singer Kay, who really is Jamiroquai's sole public face, has recently recovered from a bout of shingles - a decidedly unglamorous illness in rock and roll terms - yet he appeared to be in his usual high spirits. Kitted out in one of his trademark 'cat in the hat' tiffers, a fluffy pink Dr Suess job, Kay delivered all his customised fancy footwork whilst intoning the ditties in that peculiar mid-Atlantic approximation of Stevie Wonder and Gil Scott-Heron.

Most of the eco-trappings have been removed from the band's stage set-up - no more portable rainforests - but they retain the punchy horn section, a cool rhythmic barrage, a mixer and the dreadlocked electric-didge player Wallis Buchanan, so if the sound gets too samey at least you can admire some very polished backing.

Kay eased in with "Hooked Up" and "Emergency" before hitting his stride during "Space Cowboy" and the psychedelic froth of "Cosmic Girl." Newer material like "Slipin and Slidin" didn't make any impression with the cognoscenti, although Ealing's answer to Fred Astaire relit the blue touch paper every time he visited the platinum selling album Travelling Without Moving.

In fact that title is a neat summation of Jamiroquai. They aren't doing anything particularly new but they do their thing with enough panache to keep one momentarily entertained.

**LIVE REVIEW #17 | Forum
London, England U.K.
November 10th-11th 1996
"Travelling Without Moving - London" By Lucky O'Brien
Q Magazine**

"I'm so glad ya hooked up on my drug," sings Jay Kay, large fluffy titter atop head, feet charting a natty move in Gazelle trainers. He very nearly didn't make it tonight. A bad case of shingles meant the gig was nearly cancelled, but he's recovered sufficiently to take his music to the people. And, crammed into the Forum, going ballistic from the start, are a mixed crowd of loyal soul fans, colourful Kay lookalikes and the odd screaming teen.

He's on fine, if somewhat fidgety, form, leading a 10-piece band through Emergency On Planet Earth, Space Cowboy and Cosmic Girl, the latter a bit of fun about a baby Barbarella who says "Step in my transporter/So I can teleport you/All around my heavenly body". A scribbly pink laser is trained on Kay as he slips around the stage, conducting the band with pointy gestures. "I like to describe the music as I go along," he tells Q later. "My dancing is a cross of hip hop, Just Ice and Orbital stuff I used to rock to when I was 18. But the electro P-funk thing is what really gets me going. The heavy shit."

The "heavy shit" doesn't really get going until the fifth number. Kay admits that the band started off with "the pause button on" and it's not until Wallis Buchanan breaks the tension with the deep, dark tones of his didgeridoo, creating a kind of ambient ecological swamp funk, that the brass section kicks

in and the band slam into Use The Force. "I must believe ... I'm rocketman ... superstar," he sings, proving that live he is a much grittier, more funky proposition than on record. There are elements of '70s disco in his sound, not just Stevie Wonder, but also the jazz-funk trickery of masters like Johnny Hammond and Roy Ayers.

On stage, those little legs are going for it below the loose Lauren sweat top, while guitarist Simon Katz, bassist Stuart Zender and drummer Derrick McKenzie set up a death-defying groove, laced with the warm tones of the didgeridoo. In fact, the "didg" is threatening to become the star of the show, maybe another Kay "up yours" to his record company, Sony, who, it is rumoured, wanted rather less of the ancient instrument. "Too bad," says Kay. "It doesn't matter if they do or don't. My job is to incorporate it into the music so it doesn't become a tokenistic thing. If I did that I'd be selling out."

When the DJ starts mixing alongside the fierce strumming of the bass, the show has the feel of early live hip hop jams, an atmosphere marred only by a cheesy backdrop featuring a sleek, shiny car. Kay, though, embraces cornball with an infectious irony, sweeping the crowd along as, in the midst of revolving dappled lights, he sings the solid pop-disco of Alright. From there, the band race through a rocking Travelling Without Moving to finish up at Virtual Insanity, the hit that has become a near-anthem. "Nice one. Respect," he shouts, coming back for the encore with a big, beaming smile.

**LIVE REVIEW #18 | Barrowland
Glasgow, U.K.**

October 15th 1996

**"Funky Chicken In A Bearskin Hat" By Simon Biggs
The Daily Telegraph**

Jamiroquai front man Jason Kay is keen on recycling, judging by the cosy eco-liberalism first aired on the band's 1992 debut, Emergency on Planet Earth. His musical instincts lead in much the same direction, offering a Nineties take on vintage American West Coast funk. It's a recipe that has so far produced several polished singles, and a rather larger number of throwaway album tracks.

But first impressions of the band's European tour, which opened before an overwhelmingly generous audience in Glasgow, suggested that material from the new Travelling Without Moving album has substantially broadened their range. After a swift run through four early hits, the temperature was raised by "Use the Force," an unlikely but successful concoction that brings together a thumping bass line with portentous synth and cod-mystical lyrics. With this song, and others such as "Everyday," Jamiroquai seem to be finding a voice of their own at last. They play to their strengths, keeping the pace up and the digressions to a minimum, and not putting too much onus on Kay's voice - one part Mickey Mouse to two parts Damon Albarn.

In trademark bearskin hat, Kay dances the funky chicken and shows a teenybopper's fascination with chart placings. "You lot put this one at number three," he announced at the beginning of "Virtual Insanity."

The only misjudgment of the evening was the introduction of Jamiroquai's favourite novelty instrument, the didgeridoo, which crops up regularly in the dullest bits of their records. Backed only by a drum beat, its muted throb sounded a lot like next-door's house party leaking through the walls at 3am. Even the dreaded bass solo would be preferable. Thankfully it played no part in the superb encore: a

rearrangement of the forthcoming single "Cosmic Girl" that creates a satisfyingly dirty funk sound. It might be a better choice for album and A-side than the slightly twee original, but then Jamiroquai's success has been built on their radio-friendly accessibility. As a live band however, they have much more to offer.

**LIVE REVIEW #19 | The Point
Dublin, Ireland U.K.
October 11th 1996
"Hip To The Trip. Man" By Nick Kelly
The Times**

What Oasis are to Britpop Jamiroquai are to Britfunk, and their seemingly inexorable rise to the top can be explained along similar lines. Take a tried and tested musical genre, pay due homage to its first principles and founding fathers, and crucially update it with a recognisable stamp all your own. It is this balancing of overtly populist instincts with the desire to shape, rather than follow, the form which holds the key.

Admittedly, Jamiroquai's claim to originality may go no further than Jason Kay's trademark hat and the Buffalo Man logo, but there's no denying that the infusion of cyber cosmic karma (such as on the closing smash hit "Virtual Insanity," or "Cosmic Girl") into the otherwise cliché lyrics adds an interesting end-of-the-millennium chic to the affair.

Of course, one suspects that the majority of the 8,000 capacity audience will tell you that they just came to The Point to move on up and get on down. Taking that as a yardstick, one could not fault Jamiroquai's acid jazz-tinged groove machine. This was automatic soul for the people.

*A multitude of musicians filled the spacious stage, including a three-piece brass section and didgeridoo player (the tireless Wallis Buchanan). A good deal of the new album, *Travelling Without Moving*, which still nestles comfortably in the bosom of the Top Ten, was given an airing, and although it was always going to be impossible to capture the slick, smooth production values which characterise Jamiroquai on record, nevertheless songs like "Alright," "High Times," and older favourites such as "When You Gonna Learn?" and "Hollywood Swinging" were performed with admirable gusto by the tight-knit band.*

One can only wonder, though, what James Brown would make of it all . . .

**LIVE REVIEW #20 | Notting Hill Festival
London, England U.K.
August 26th 1996
"The Prat In The Hat Whips Up A Party" By Garth Cartwright
The Guardian**

Carnival allows for all kinds of celebration but the widest smile belongs to Jamiroquai's Jason Kay. A native son of west London, Jamiroquai's carnival headlining status was a celebration on Kay's home turf.

Kay is the wide boy of British pop, all mouth and hats, dogged by controversy since Jamiroquai's debut album entered the charts as No. 1 three years ago. Partly this is due to Jamiroquai being promoted as a multi-million pound package by Sony while so much black British music languishes underfunded.

Kay's habit of being a walking, talking contradiction has not helped: this is the environmentalist who spent his initial royalties on an Aston Martin and now seems more concerned about Latin America's cocoa production- his latest album is the inane title Travelling Without Moving- than the rain forests he once eulogised. An appearance on The Girlie Show wearing only his boxer shorts confirmed for many that he is the prat in the hat. Unfortunately, it is skin game that gets played most often with Kay: can white men sing black?

This is irrelevant. Throughout this century there has been a two way traffic. Jimmie Rodgers learned from black musicians in the 1920s and was Howling Wolf's favorite singer. Wolf became the Rolling Stones' hero and they gave Wolf and his peers an international audience while influencing a generation of black and white musicians. What matters is whether a musician like Kay develops from his source material or remains a mimic. Kay's natural ability is unquestionable but his song writing and arranging skills remain little more than Xeroxes of 1970s soul moves.

The 1995 remix of Space Cowboy by master DJ David Morales put Kay above a bubbling house beat and back in the charts. None of his new songs follow up that experience. Jamiroquai, as much as Oasis, reflect British pop retro instincts with a sound based around one period of a more innovative talent from two or three decades.

Jamiroquai headlined the Kiss FM stage at 6pm. Facing a sea of humanity, the nine piece band were almost inaudible beneath the boom of sound systems and the hum of generators. Kay has proved a durable performer ever since acid jazz went belly up and with some slick disco moves the wide-brimmed, Artful Dodger of Britfunk whipped his band into motion and sang. Beyond all other reservations it is the joyous yelp of a voice that determines Jamiroquai's popularity.

The choice of Jamiroquai to headline KISS FM's stage was questioned by some. Kay has always been connected with the station yet there were reservations about the elevation of an essentially pop band with tough grooves over other artists more in tune with the carnival's Afro-Caribbean synergy. But as twilight set in and thousands of whistles and horns blared to add a Latin London flavour to Jamiroquai's chunky guitar, brassy horns and didgeridoo I had to admit this westside player knows how to hold a party.

**LIVE REVIEW #21 | The Metro
Chicago, Illinois USA
September 10th 1995
"Jamiroquai Rolls Hip-Hop, Horns Into A Soulful Sound"
By Chauncy Hollingsworth
Chicago Tribune**

You might expect most white boys from England to be about as funky as a board meeting.

But Jay Kay is a new breed. Vocalist for Jamiroquai, a heavy-hitter from London's now declining acid jazz scene, he lathered Metro's capacity crowd Sunday night with a voice whose soul rivals Stevie Wonder's. Behind him, the musicians of Jamiroquai demonstrated the best of what acid jazz is: the weaving of a crack live band (horn section, two percussionists, guitar, bass) with a hip-hop disc jockey providing samples and beats.

Eyes closed, bearing down on the mike with a periodic grimace at the high notes, Kay stood in place for long intervals, letting the band and his voice take the forefront.

But amid the funk-drenched horn solos, fat bass grooves and record-scratching, Kay periodically leaped out of stasis, his red gym shoes flitting back and forth as if possessed. Like full-body sleight of hand, his upper torso broke to the left when his feet cut to the right. His ease in movement and vocal endurance was like a martial artist's.

Among the show's many highlights: "Too Young to Die" (from 1993's "Emergency on Planet Earth"), a scorching rendition of "Light Years" and an instrumental jam, "Journey to Arnhemland," which featured a didgeridoo, an Australian aborigine wind instrument.

In an interview before the show, Kay made reference to the band's second album, "The Return of the Space Cowboy," as an allusion to a drug-rehabbed lifestyle (i.e., the space cowboy has returned to Earth).

But it seems the cowboy is still flying: as Kay stumped for marijuana legalization, making the usual comparative references to the legality of alcohol, members of the crowd threw dime-bags on-stage.

Consistent with the chorus from "Space Cowboy" ("At the speed of cheeba [marijuana]/We'll go deeper/Maybe I'll have to get high/Just to get by"), Kay took a deep, satisfied drag from a freshly rolled cigarette near the end of the show. To the crowd's cheers, he exhaled a rolling cloud with a grin.

**LIVE REVIEW #22 | American Legion Hall
Los Angeles, California USA
June 5th 1995
"Jamiroquai Adds Funk To Lively Jazz Lite" By Lorraine Ali
Los Angeles Times**

Jamiroquai is to jazz and funk what the New Kids on the Block were to hip-hop and rock: cute and catchy- though minus the choreography.

With an obvious passion for Stevie Wonder, the English outfit plays jazz-lite, then adds a deejay and few funky grooves for hip credibility. But in a time when such artists as the Beastie Boys and Tricky are taking these styles a step further via technology and imagination, Jamiroquai is almost too derivative and fluffy to hone and definable personality.

Thursday at the Hollywood American Legion Hall, the 10-piece band- which included a horn section, two drummers and a turntable jockey- played meandering jams to a packed house mixing rave and yuppie acid-jazz demographics. The group made for a lively and warm presence, but the music lacked any spark of uniqueness.

Animated singer Jay K, clothed in a baggy jacket and an oversized ski cap that often obscured his eyes, danced in a series of jerks and fluid movements while his '70s, Motown-esque voice came off as flawless and inviting.

The band played tight numbers, all slightly reminiscent of AM hits by bands such as Tower of Power, then brought out a didgeridoo (a trance-inducing Australian Aboriginal pipe) to create the most memorable part of the show.

Jamiroquai is entertaining, but the group is too awed by funk and jazz masters of the past to make its own mark.

**LIVE REVIEW #23 | Liberty
Adelaide, Australia
March 24th 1995
“A Cat, A Hat And No Mat” By Paul Kitching**

The cat in the hat can scat- he can also groove, move and prove just why his band is one of the world's finest jazz-funk outfits currently pumping on home the virtues of original funky vibes. Before Jason Kay and his UK collective took over the stage, the well-packed room got truly into the mood thanks to the fresh sounds of one of Australia's best groove units - Skunkhour. The lads were well received - pleasing the devoted with their well-known hits and introducing a few numbers from their new album FEED, due for imminent release.

A brief break allowed time to appreciate the tasty beats selected by the Huggy Bear Sound System, time to get ripped off in the pursuit of drinking, and time to wonder why this venue was chosen in the first place - for example if you weren't in the choice spot, the sound was pretty average, and what the hell was that noise that farewelled departing patrons in the foyer as they left the brilliant show? A fitting end, I think not! Nevertheless, it sure was one blow-out of a gig which followed when Jamiroquai surfaced and took all attendees on an awesome journey of jazz-funk induced joy for the ensuing two plus hours. Jamiroquai quickly diffused the notion that they are merely Jason Kay and a few others, when the 11-piece outfit grooved like no other - letting the funk flow from the first note of REVOLUTION 1993 through to the last beat of WHEN YOU GONNA LEARN - the latter inducing a 10 minute didgeridoo-laced rhythmic frenzy as its powerful introduction.

*Slotted neatly between these tunes was just about every Jamiroquai track you'd want to see and hear live. A notable omission was the firm favourite and recent single HALF THE MAN even if Toby Smith on keyboards did play its opening chords only to be greeted by Jay's decision to introduce a new track - one which I can only surmise is titled MR BOOGIE - a damn funky excursion, I might add. Other highlights included SCAM, BLOW YOUR MIND, the new single LIGHT YEARS and the all-out jams of JUST ANOTHER STORY (“no-one makes a f**kin' move!”). A huge impression was made by the three member horn section who let fly some intense sounds, including, one funky flute on STILLNESS IN TIME - also one of the many tunes Jay and the crowd (yours truly blissfully included) scatted along to with ease.*

In fact, the whole band grooved all night with Jay leading them in some mighty fine dancing himself - the guy's bod is just as flexible as his mind is active is and aware to its surroundings. As he indicated when referring to P.J.Keating as one who enjoys self-gratification and then versing his disapproval of the treatment of our Aborigines. A fitting time to introduce key band member and Australian native Wallis Buchanan to mike up his didgeridoo and lead the group in the funky didged-out grooves of JOURNEY TO ARNHEMLAND. It was then time for Jay to be share-ware conscious and hand out his water bottles before launching into the frantic vibes of KIDS which lead us to the inevitable encore of RETURN OF THE SPACE COWBOY and EMERGENCY ON PLANET EARTH.

Yes, at times Jamiroquai were quite indulgent - but hey, so were the fans. Man, it was just too hip and definitely the best jazz-funk act I have ever experienced in the live format. The cat was definitely NOT sitting on the mat - nor was I.

**LIVE REVIEW #24 | Liberty
Adelaide, Australia
March 24th 1995
“Jamiroquai/Skunkhour” By Paul Marcon-Ransom
dB Magazine**

The old with the new, the young and not so young, the Rundle and the Hindley - what a brew.

If you're lucky you are occasionally allowed to witness a dose of three dimensional surrealism, and the mixture of images that circled Jamiroquai's Adelaide performance provided a few hours of curious melange. It had everything; London rude boy patois, drug references, hat jokes, Stevie Wonder vocals, 'nineties PC and a more old fashioned dedication to a tight groove. Even Elton John dancing with the animated fauna on the giant video screen seemed oddly apt.

Without wishing to be thought sarcastic, the whirlpool of styles was encapsulated by the music. Jamiroquai breezed through the finicky hues of genre with a broad sweep of undisguised funk, rounding up the influences and making them all run along with the thread of supple, elasticated rhythms that wound its way around the whole show.

No disrespect to Skunkhour, who played a solid set to a near full house, or indeed to the ten fabulous musicians of Jamiroquai who backed him up, but Jason Kay was the central figure.

Jay has it all, a voice that holds up beautifully, a sense of rhythm, some eccentric body movements and a laconic strain of banter. They make him intensely watchable.

Even given that he took four of five tracks to warm up, his hold on the audience was unbreachable. Whether or not he has a hit album on his hands, he will always be able to draw a crowd because electric performance transcends the fickle favour of mass fashion, it genuinely impresses, leaving a small deposit in the memory bank that glows brighter with the passing of time.

The lad is also brash to point of arrogance. "I just wanna' say that your Prime Minister is a wanker," he announced. This was followed by a short burst of 'truth' about Aborigines and (almost) everybody cheered. Hey that's cool, that's Jazz. Got a light, man?

Jamiroquai's eleven person ensemble was worth every ounce of Jay's personal luminance, AND cockiness. They were tight, sure, but they weren't afraid to let it hang either. Pulsing renditions of THE KIDS, JUST ANOTHER STORY, SPACE COWBOY and EMERGENCY ON PLANET EARTH were testament enough to this band's power but their ability to take their collective foot off the accelerator was even better. Their two hour set was filled with light and shade, textured craftily and executed with energy, humour and deftness of touch.

Although there was a mad rush to get out of Hindley Street after the show, the moment probably lingered elsewhere. The punters surely got their dollars worth this time. Jamiroquai kept going well after they could have been forgiven for tiredness, playing with zeal but never forgetting the squashed up masses in front of them. This was no Acid Jazz gospel delivered from on high but an attempt to communicate some energy and passion to an audience. It seemed to be very effective.

**LIVE REVIEW #25 | Forum
London, England U.K.
November 10th 1994
"Full Steam Ahead" By David Sinclair
The Times**

With their second album, Return of the Space Cowboy, only narrowly failing to repeat the chart-topping success of last year's debut, Jamiroquai remain by far the biggest act to have emerged from the British acid jazz scene. But mainstream acceptance has not persuaded them to tone down their explosively complex formula.

In fact, quite the reverse. Wearing his trademark silly hat, on this occasion a woolly affair with a bobble and side-flaps, singer Jay Kay steered his ten-piece band through some staggeringly busy arrangements. "Revolution 1993" (rechristened "1994") set the tone for the evening with its fidgety funk rhythm, absurdly tricky drum breaks, trumpet solo and scat singing (mostly hinging on the word "revolution," repeatedly twisted through a 180-degree melodic arc). Such musical expertise was impressive enough, but even more amazing was the fact that the crowd actually managed to dance to it.

Wallace [sic] Buchanan joined them with his didgeridoo. Its murky drone led the way during "Journey to Arnhemland," the heaviest funk riff of the night and a marvellous showcase for Stuart Zender's impossibly deep bass guitar sound. Then it was off on a voyage round the sunnier side of their repertoire with a sequence of "Mr. Moon," "Too Young to Die" and "Half the Man" producing a more mellow mood, albeit with no reduction in the hyperactive performance level.

Even the lighting of a large "cigarette," which was ritually passed round the band before they launched into "Space Cowboy," did not slow them up ("Legalise it," Kay demanded when both song and smoke were over) and they tore into the frantic finale of "The Kids."

It was a disarmingly enthusiastic and technically ambitious display even if, at times, the performance seemed too pressure-cooked to let the full flavour of the songs emerge.

**LIVE REVIEW #26 | Forum
London, England U.K.
November 10th 1994
"Miracle Workers Of Funk" By Linton Chiswick
The Guardian**

*Living up to its reputation as one of the best live jazz/funk bands on the circuit, Jamiroquai made its singular presence felt with the first of two nights at London's Forum. It was a tight, well-integrated, but energetic and charismatic performance, featuring songs from the band's debut and its recent follow-up *The Return of the Space Cowboy*, plus a handful of covers.*

Jamiroquai's tendency towards musical retrospection has been a critical Achilles' heel ever since the group burst onto the scene last year, but it seemed an insignificant issue once the band found its groove.

Certainly, the shadows of Stevie Wonder psychedelic-era Temptations, Roy Ayers and Jimi Hendrix could all be glimpsed at various times in the riffs, mellow electric piano harmonies and funky wah-wah guitar, but the band was soaked in the trendy, '90s neo-beat aesthetic that has accorded it not only its cool, but also its earth-loving, young but passive, widespread appeal.

*Vocalist and outspoken bandleader Jason Kay is an extraordinary figure to watch. Seemingly hyperactive, he does not so much dance as dart fast and ferret-like in his trademark teacosy hat (yes, he's still wearing it despite posing hatless for *The Face* recently).*

His thin but musical voice and superb timing were the source of the best music, despite a virtuoso rhythm section that included percussion, a DJ and two inspired, mesmeric appearances by Wallace [sic] Buchanan - London's funkier exponent of the didgeridoo.

Just in case there was any uncertainty about the theme of the last album's title track, he ostentatiously flourished something as similar to a joint as Sony no doubt would have allowed and (after a member of the audience threw a lighter on stage) lit it and passed it around the band to monumental applause. If he had passed it around the 2000-strong audience, that would have been something to really applaud - a biblical Jason Kay performing miracles without fish or loaves - but with an eight-album deal, there is plenty of time for that yet. For now, two hours of non-stop dance music without a single tedious moment is truly impressive enough.

**LIVE REVIEW #27 | Barrowland
Glasgow, U.K.
November 3rd 1994
"Tribal Gathering" By Peter Easton
The Herald**

People do not buy double albums of jazz-funk by accident, certainly not in numbers sufficient for a high place in the album chart. Jason Kay has made a lot of converts to the cause of global funkiness. The result is that Jamiroquai gigs resemble an almost believable form of pan-cultural tribalism: every haircut known to science is gathered, getting funky to an alcoholic spliff-tastic party groove -- music decorated by lyrics advocating love, being true to oneself, and hailing the revolution.

The shaman is slightly built, famous for his hats (in this case Himalayan) and for a voice which is a reedy version of Stevie Wonder. His band is an eight-strong, including three horns, plus a scratcher DJ and a didgeridoo-player. The latter made the best noise of the evening and received the biggest cheer. The rest performed with that relentless dedication for which jazz-funkers are renowned.

You already know what they sounded like without being told -- every piano chord, bass slap, guitar chop, and brass blast. A concertgoer needs to be in the mood for this and clearly the paying customers were.

Let's face it, the messages make you feel good, both about Jamiroquai and about yourself for liking them: love the world, love the people, don't take any nonsense from anyone. It's the last bit that worries me.

**LIVE REVIEW #28 | The Beat
UK Television Show
April 30th 1994
"Jamiroquai / Brand New Heavies / Des'ree" By Holly Barringer
Melody Maker Magazine**

Every few weeks, "The Beat" showcases several bands in London and everyone who wants to be on late-night TV goes along. OK. Only the most famous people appear, obviously. Gary Crowley wouldn't want any shite; his life must be full of it as it is. Tonight, then, funksome popularity prevails, be it through the groove appeal of Brand New Heavies, or chart successes like Des'ree and Jamiroquai.

First on is Des'ree, permeating the air with a voice so perfect it may as well not exist in these days where personality lords it over perfection. And just as well, really, otherwise our pop icons would all be opera singers.

And so, with Mr. Sheen-like finesse, Ms. Ree sweeps through her set, weaving her talons into the dry ice and crooning recipes for a better life: "You gotta be strong / You gotta be tough / You gotta be together" ... etc. Y'know, Des, I feel like a great weight's been lifted from my shoulders. No wonder, my head's just fallen off. Ha ha bonk.

After The Sandals conclude their half-hour of not much, things start to look up. When I start to look up, however, all I can see is that Crowley person on several large video screens. He is introducing Brand New Heavies, who slink on stage and funkadelic themselves stupid in pink Lurex and platforms, knocking seven shades of shit out of any of their records.

Quite a nice surprise, really.

I don't know about Jamiroquai, though. For a band who've drawn influences from so many of their elders and betters, and so obviously want to be way-cool, they haven't quite got it right. Technically, they're faultless; it's the cool bit that needs work. Although Kay skips precariously around his playpen like a weeble that wobbles but won't fall down, he displays none of the dudeness of Sly or Stevie. Announcing that you have "a bum like a tap" due to a bout of food poisoning just doesn't do it for me. But I do do do do along with the rest of them, think of "Superstition" and shut up.

Jamiroquai - too young to die? Well, maybe we could just hurt them a little...

**LIVE REVIEW #29 | Brixton Academy
London, England U.K.
November 29th 1993
"The Cat In The Hat" By Ian Gittins**

What a fucking set! You can accuse Jamiroquai of many faults, but certainly not of thinking small. For tonight's triumphant homecoming gig, after a spell touring America and Japan, the thin and funksome one has transplanted a lavish tropical rainforest onto the Academy's normally strictly non-botanical stage. Waterfalls cascade down into the photographer's pit; I hope our lensmen, Piers, brought his wellies.

And he remains a frustrating paradox (Jason Kay, that is, not Piers. Well, maybe Piers as well). His band can still dazzle with lustrous, luminous outbursts of funk or juicy, joyous squalls of wah-wah, but the boy Wonder himself remains capable of shooting his ensemble in the collective foot every time he opens his motormouth. Tonight, he leans on the mic stand and tells jokes, then gallops up and down the elaborate set's stairs like a gabbling, amphetamine-fuelled Michael Barrymore. The man just doesn't know when to keep schtum.

The music? Well, Jamiroquai are still capable of moments of stark, sudden brilliance, but can be equally guilty of stretches of aimless, funky time-serving. It's "The Emergency on Planet Earth" story all over. "When You Gonna Learn?" oozes and streams like aural ambrosia, Kay's devout and pitch-perfect tones a delight, but elsewhere his band can carp and procrastinate their way into a jazz-funk corner, making futile musical smalltalk. Jamiroquai don't yet have to depth of material to match their talent.

And the audience are a worry. Jamiroquai are mixing with the wrong crowd. Tonight, the Great White Hope plays to 4,000 style victims, the same right-on bunch of Wag Club pseuds who flocked to idolise Courtney Pine, say, five years back. If he panders to their (absence of) taste, Jay Kay will end up producing the same kind of anaemic, diluted soul-by-numbers his detractors unfairly accuse him of

playing now. Why, he even plucks some mock-turf from his lavish set and jokes about smoking grass as is he's Jim "Nick Nick" Davidson or something.

Frankly, I cringe.

Has he "progressed," then? In truth, Jamiroquai's set is the same mix'n'match of gold dust and garbage that I witnessed four months back, but then they've had no chance to take stock. 1993 has been an extraordinary year for the lippy Jason Kay and I'd guess he needs a few months off the promotional treadmill to replenish his natural energies before he can produce any barnstorming new material. Tonight, he lollops around Brixton's humid temporary Brazil wearing his Gran's picnic blanket as a shawl (with matching tea-cosy, natch) and grins furiously. It's probably the most we can ask for.

Conclusions? Jamiroquai are a medium-bordering-on-major (nobody's really sure, yet) talent currently idling on autopilot. Kay's got a voice like an angel, he's gorrallorra soul, but we don't yet know how he truly measures up. Next year's second LP could either be a modern miracle or a crock of shite, and I'd be equally (un)surprised by either.

Right now, only Jamiroquai know the answer to that puzzler, and Jay's keeping it firmly under his hat.

LIVE REVIEW #30 | Brixton Academy

London, England U.K.

November 29th 1993

"Jamiroquai's Main Man Delivers: Furry Hats & Funk At The Academy"

By David Chaal

Daily Telegraph

At a time when popular music seems to be in the grip of samplers, sequencers and electronically driven dance grooves, the idea that musicians still have a role to play in making music might seem a trifle old-fashioned. But given the sudden rise to enormous popularity of Jamiroquai, a 10-piece group inspired by the great funk and soul bands of the Seventies and led by a furry-hatted young man from Ealing called Jason Kaye [sic], it's one that seems to be gaining credence.

*Jamiroquai's debut album, *Emergency on Planet Earth (We're Doomed- All Doomed!)* shot to number one when it was released earlier this year. Creating music of such orchestral complexity is easy enough in the studio. The question is, can Jamiroquai do it live? Undoubtedly. At London's Brixton Academy, a packed, throbbing house witnessed a stunning display of ensemble musicianship from Kaye and his men. On stage decked out like the set of a Tarzan movie, these motley-looking but accomplished young players picked, plucked and blew with admirable skill and restraint, creating a rich and deeply funky musical backdrop over which the main man delivered his scatty, beat-perfect, uncannily mature vocals. Somehow, too, the presence among all this funkiness of a guest didgeridoo player seemed perfectly natural. Nor was this show just a reiteration of the *Emergency* album. As well as familiar favourites such as *When You Gonna Learn* (reprised for the final encore) and *Revolution*, the band also played a substantial chunk of new material, the quality of which augurs well for future releases. As for Kaye himself: well, he's a bit of a ninny, to be sure. He fizzed around the stage like a robotic Andy Pandy, he told some terrible jokes and, due to audience demand, he even took off his famous hat (he looks much better with it on). But he can be forgiven these minor transgressions, because he's clearly a man with music in his very marrow. Hats off to Jamiroquai.*

**LIVE REVIEW #31 | Brixton Academy
London, England U.K.
November 29th 1993
“Exploding The Myth Of The Sleeping Cat” By Max Bell
Evening Standard**

At a time when popular music seems to be in the grip of samplers, sequencers and electronically driven dance grooves, the idea that musicians still have a role to play in making music might seem a trifle old-fashioned. But given the sudden rise to enormous popularity of Jamiroquai, a 10-piece group inspired by the great funk and soul bands of the Seventies and led by a furry-hatted young man from Ealing called Jason Kaye [sic], it's one that seems to be gaining credence.

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**LIVE REVIEW #32 | Trees
Dallas, Texas USA
October 28th 1993
“Jamiroquai Comes Over Better Live; Jay Kay's Retro Soul Is Polished,
But Derivative”
By Matt Weitz
The Dallas Morning News**

Live performance can atone for a lot: Take, for example, Jamiroquai's Wednesday night performance at Trees.

The band came to town with a hype-heavy burden in the form of their annoying front man, Jay Kay. Mr. Kay's press portrays a skinny young English kid with a penchant for sill hats, aboriginal eco-chic and pompous pronouncements like "soul does not pick colors."

Jamiroquai's debut album, Emergency on Planet Earth, does not fare much better. A competent enough tribute to the American soul music of the mid-'70s, Emergency breaks little new ground.

This is just the kind of act you'd expect- no, want- to fall flat, but it was apparent from the show's first notes that the large onstage- horns, percussionists and a turntable-twirling MC in addition to the

standard guitar/bass/keyboards/drums- was so tight it squeaked. What had seemed a bit stale on disc was bright and sharp live.

Mr. Kay left his floppy hats on the bus, opting instead to cop a little urban B-boy cool with a watch cap pulled low over his eyebrows. His singing's good- although it sounds a lot like little Stevie Wonder with some Marvin Gaye accents- and he had some entertaining stage moves.

As the show progressed, things definitely got hot as a little Earth, Wind and Fire began to peer out through the horn parts.

Jamiroquai was not afraid to stray from their first album- a confidence that sometimes eludes bands with only one release.

But what are you talking about when you're talking about Jamiroquai anyway? Sony's eight-album deal is with Mr. Kay, not any one of the other guys onstage with him. Next year Jamiroquai could be a completely different group. Wednesday night's sound, then, is more a matter of careful auditioning than identity. For all intents and purposes, Mr. Kay is Jamiroquai.

And Mr. Kay is still a problem. The self-aware way he showboats sucking Rolling Rock or lighting up a smoke is a bit too precious. When he drops snippets of Chuck Berry's Maybelline or Bob Marley's Lively Up Yourself into a song, it's hard to tell whether you're hearing a tribute to beloved tunes or evidence of a pirate's skill, although it becomes clearer when he closes the set with Archie Bell and the Drells' Tighten Up.

Through no fault of its own, the band so much of its energy dissipate with that cover. Ultimately, with all his soulful posturing and attention to current events and the environment, Mr. Kay labored mightily and brought forth a longer, louder, less elegant version of something Marvin Gaye said better in 1971 with What's Going On.

**LIVE REVIEW #33 | The Roxy
Los Angeles, California USA
October 19th 1993
"Jamiroquai Revives Funk" By Steve Hochman
Los Angeles Times**

A concert by the young English band Jamiroquai at the Roxy on Monday might have provided the answer to the mystery about what happened to British rock: While America's future Pearl Jamers and Stone Temple Pilots were learning riffs off their older siblings' Sabbath and Zep albums a few years ago, their English counterparts were apparently studying the Average White Bands and Rufus.

We've gotten used to hearing samples of early-'70s jazz-funk in various acid-jazz and hip-hop experiments, but it was still odd to see these young musicians expertly and tightly reviving the style wholesale. Singer Jason Kay- topped with a furry hat that looked like a mushroom lid- was a particularly odd sight-and-sound combination. He looked about 16, but he sounded like a seasoned '70s soul veteran as he scattered around fairly intricate melodies while his nine-piece band re-created the Fender Rhodes piano, popping bass and smooth horns blend that was ubiquitous 20 years ago.

They've added a turntable scratcher, occasional hip-hop rhythms and, on a few songs, the rumble of an Australian didjeridoo, but it was still an average (mostly) white funk band.

Then again, that's hardly average in grungy 1993, and even if Jamiroquai doesn't offer any revelations or elevations of the form, the group radiated a strange aura of revisionary hip.

LIVE REVIEW #34 | Lakota

Bristol, U.K.

June 23rd 1993

“A True Soul Sensation Or A Shakatak With A Hat?”

By Phil Johnson

The Independent

'Don't get so excited girls; I know it's big, but calm yourselves down.' Could singer Jay- who recently took his kit off for the cover of The Face- be talking about his hat? It's certainly a whopper, a huge fur job whose shadow all but obscures his elfin features. Indeed the crush of female admirers at the front of the stage were lucky to see him at all.

The rest of us, perched up high in the gallery, fighting for space, were fortunate if we could catch a fleeting glimpse of the drummer. In a week when, as Jay told us, Jamiroquai's album had just reached number one, this was the hottest ticket in town and the Lakota in Bristol was packed. The air of exultation was infectious and the group performed with the kind of overbrimming confidence that sudden success brings.

But those who saw them at the same venue six months ago could like habitues of the Cavern when Beatlemania first hit, cast a curmudgeonly spoiling vote: you really should have seen them then, you know, when they were really hot... Then, Jay's closely-miked voice really did make sense of the Stevie Wonder comparisons. Now, he sounded rather tired and flat and the band seemed slacker too, though Jay has an admirably liberal attitude to manning levels, with nine musicians doing the job of five or six: an irregularly employed didgeridoo player was clearly guilty of Spanish practices and the double-decked turntable operative managed to find plenty of spare time to roll cigarettes.

Toby Smith on keyboards is the main contributor to the overall sound, playing museum piece instruments like a Hohner Clavinet and a Fender Rhodes piano, but he is so preoccupied with the antique toggle-switches and knobs that only one hand is free for playing. A horn section and a busy percussionist fatten out the riffs, but if they are to be more than, as some critics have said, Shakatak with a hat, Jay's singing really needs to shine.

Only once, on a long, improvised, slowish number where Jay repeated the words 'I'll be loving you till the end of time' over and over again, did he fulfil the promise of his earlier appearance. The singles were dispatched fairly summarily and at times it seemed as if the band were in dreamy Glastonbury mode a week early; certainly there was no sense of urgency in the performance.

As frontperson, though, Jay, even below par, is still a winner. Prowling the apron of the stage like a Siberian sentry, he managed to animate the otherwise fairly muso-like demeanour of the rest of the group into a semblance of the pop heroes they have become.

The more or less unreconstructed jazz-funk that the group puts out is still best represented by its original progenitors, however. At the Jazz Cafe last week, the veteran drummer Norman Connors led his Starship Orchestra (actually a quartet and two vocalists) through some occasionally inspired routines and, in Bristol on Sunday, the Benny Hill of the genre (and Jay's main man), the vibes player Roy Ayers, put Jamiroquai to shame with yet another mammoth set of soul-jazz anthems. Wearing a hankie on his

head, satin leggings and a dinner jacket, Ayers is no longer a sartorial challenge to Jay, but in musicianship, Ayers is better by far.

**LIVE REVIEW #35 | Brixton Academy
London, England U.K.
June 17th 1993
“Hitting The High Hat” By Otis Baxter
Weekly Journal**

On the night, Brixton seemed to buzz with anticipation. Jamiroquai was to perform an eagerly awaited show and the trendy teens were out in force.

The Academy was jam packed and come show time there was still a queue waiting to get in. Femi and Marco, the DJs from Young Disciples, kept the crowd moving and grooving with some first-rate acid jazz until 1am when Jamiroquai finally decided it was time to make an entrance.

They kicked off with a song new to the crowd and went down well with hard core fans. With a voice that sets him apart from the other pop groups, lead singer Jason Kaye [sic] used this opener to scat his way to the top of his vocal range - not a great feat, admittedly. But When You Gonna Learn had us all moving with its funk groove - one of the night's more original numbers. Blow Your Mind was not so much a song, more a showcase of the band's talents and featured a piano break that was pure joy; and Too Young To Die also went down a storm. Kaye and the band reprised most of the songs on the album, but en masse they proved much of a muchness, undifferentiated, and the audience started to lose interest.

Jamiroquai played from the rear of the stage, Kaye's face was in any case well hidden by his trademark big hat, and their set lasted about an hour. Altogether not an auspicious unveiling; rather a case of too little, too late at night.

**LIVE REVIEW #36 | Brixton Academy
London, England U.K.
June 17th 1993
“Take Hat”
Time Out**



What does Jamiroquai's Jay K keep under his hat? Three shredded wheat, a pet hamster, the Stevie Wonder songbook? We make no comment about him baldly going on stage at 12.30am amid a fog of dry ice at the Academy last week. Recent slaphead allegations have not gone down well with the

hair-triggered Jay. He got so angry he could, ooh, take his hat off. 'Just to prove that I have got hair!' he exclaimed, whipping off his big furry jobbie, revealing a mousy in-between haircut.

He also spent the whole evening pontificating about the unfairness of the press. 'Sorry if I'm the wrong colour, perhaps I should sit under a sunlamp,' he tetchily remarked. Then the milliner's friend came on for the encore smoking what looked like a massive spliff. However, Jay's bitterness couldn't disguise the fact that the performance was rather soulless compared with earlier, smaller gigs. Will it be hair today, gone tomorrow?

**LIVE REVIEW #37 | Town & Country
Leeds, U.K.
January 13th 1993
"Young, Gifted & White" By Ben Thompson
The Independent**

The last time Jamiroquai played in London was in a small, sold-out club. It was not a complete success. So booking them in at the Town & Country seems a little ambitious. In the event it leads to what is known as a roadblock. You can't move for nightclub cognoscenti in crisp polyester.

The man they've come to see is a skinny, 22-year-old white boy called Jay, in a hat which consists of two bearskins caught in the act of reproduction. He bunny-hops about with a total disregard for social convention- imagine if Blue Peter's Peter Duncan thought he was James Brown. He also sings, with a highish soul whoop reminiscent of Stevie Wonder and- but don't let this put you off- of Hue and Cry's Pat Kane.

The band are large and loose, but in a disciplined sort of way. One of the brass section is called Ralph. They play rambling jazz-fusion in the Gil Scott-Heron style, which only once lapses into unrestrained self-indulgence. The songs, many of them just finished, occasionally lack structure, but always have a melodic spring in their step.

This is by far the largest crowd Jay has played to, but he takes to it with an embarrassment of ease. 'I can see 50 people I know in the first four rows,' he proclaims, and it doesn't sound like showing off. Even after a full hour and a half, he is reluctant to leave. The didgeridoo wobble which underscores the courtly fake-string arrangement on the debut single 'When You Gonna Learn?' goes beyond the normal powers of human endurance, but Jay's enjoyment is such that people seem quite happy for him to carry on all night. Black and white alike seem susceptible to his geeky allure, and Jamiroquai could be set to skate over clubland divisions with a grace not seen since Soul II Soul in their prime.

**LIVE REVIEW #38 | Town & Country
Leeds, U.K.
January 13th 1993
"Funk: Town And Country: Jamiroquai" By Robin Denselow
The Guardian**

This, we were told, was to be one of the events of '93, a show that no self-respectinf follower of musical fashion could possibly ignore- the first major showcase by Jamiroquai. The word was out on the underground dance circuit that this outfit had just signed a remarkable eight-album deal with Sony, and were about to become public knowledge in a very big way. What's more, they'd sold out T & C even faster than the Eurythmics.

The singer, a 22-year-old from Ealing simply known as Jay, was hidden in a remarkable furry hat, while his bass player and other colleagues favoured the bank-robber balaclava look, but were upstaged by the didgeridoo player (I kid you not) who wandered on in a multi-coloured turban.

The music was a fusion of all known funk hybrids, with odd echoes of everyone from Stevie Wonder to the Meters. Jay had a high, pleasant voice which was short on emotional range, and his young band knocked out an effective enough groove with help from a veteran brass section.

SECTION #3 Band Interviews

Sub-Section #1: Group Interviews

Group Interview #1 | Dance Music Authority May 1997

“Jamiroquai” By Matthew Consola

“The Guys Discuss The Issues Of Remixes & Their Growing Popularity In The U.S.”

While I wouldn't necessarily call them an overnight success, ever since their 1993 debut this British quintet have become European pop stars of mega proportions. Jamiroquai's recipe for success has been the combination of lead singer Jay Kay (a powerfully outspoken twenty-seven-year old white boy tenor with dreadlocks, who's [sic] love for pot and fast, expensive cars is only outshone by his talent and exuberance for timeless music) with a passionate and polished set of musicians (Toby Smith - Keyboards, Stuart Zender - Bass, Derrick McKenzie - Drums, Simon Katz - Guitar, Wallis - Didge), who's [sic] talent for crafting classic soul, disco and funk has propelled them to mega status. I recently had the fortune to sit down with this humorous and always outspoken group of musicians, and while often they all spoke at once, making it very difficult to quote any one person, this is much of what transpired.

DMA: I've read through many of your interviews and they have all seemed to ask pretty much the same things, so I'll try to avoid the same mundane questions:

JAM: *Hmmm... let's see... our favorite color is blue, the name was inspired by Jay's fascination with the Native American Iroquois Nation plus the ability to "Jam," Jay's a 27 year old white boy with scruffy dreadlocks, tenor... sounds like Stevie Wonder, our music's an acid-jazz vision with a duality towards the ecology thing, he's scruffy, we're broke, but drive very expensive cars. How's that? There's the interview... we're done. (laughs)*

DMA: I'm gonna start by getting my one and only criticism out of the way early-- why are your damn songs so short on the new album?

JAM: *Hang on a second...you've obviously been listening to the third album...some of the tracks on the first album go 10 minutes long. Most of the tracks on the second album went 6 or 7 minutes.*

DMA: So what was different in crafting "Travelling Without Moving"?

JAM: *We wanted to avoid getting too self-indulgent on this album. We wanted to concentrate on getting a more light feel, working with a more dance element...And not get too anal with the jazz fusion masterpieces...where they tend to take up a lot of space on the albums.*

JAY: *But there is a new track we've just recorded called "Bullet" which is a 9 or 10 minute extravaganza (laughs)...it will be on the flip side of "Virtual Insanity"...the flip side groove!*

DMA: Speaking of extra tracks, what is the bonus ghost track hidden at the end of the new album?

JAY: *The ghost track is a jungle track.*

DMA: I think it's a fierce track and deserves to be released as a single. Why is it not listed on the album?

JAY: You think it should be released as a single, eh? You don't fancy trying to be my boss now do you? (laughs)

DMA: No (laughs)...from what I've heard of you, that's not an easy occupation to have.

JAY: (Laughs) Actually I think it would be great. We'd love to put out things like that as a single...the record company wouldn't have it.

DMA: And what's it called?

JAM: "Function."

DMA: Why a ghost track and not just the final track?

JAM: Because it was done in one take. Yeah, just for a laugh. We didn't want to list it because it was just us playing after we had set the studio up to do another tune. But it's a bit o' fun, ain't it?

DMA: Yeah...and that's a lot different than anything on the album. Jay's voice lends so well to the Jungle tracks...Ever think of just doing an album of this style of music...just for the hell of it?

JAM: We sort a want to do an EP of out-takes and tunes that come up but don't go on the album. Some really out there stuff. In the course of touring, we've already recorded and written about two more albums worth of live and new material.

DMA: So you guys are currently on tour. Where are you right now, New York?

JAM: Yeah...actually we just finished our tour. It went really well.

DMA: Any towns that partially stand out in your minds? How was San Francisco, since I didn't get a chance to catch you?

JAY: They were all really good. Very hard to choose one in particular...they all had their own very special vibe. San Francisco was really hot...sweaty and groovy. It was the third time we had played Bimbo's...I like it there.

DMA: Let's talk about the band for a second. Unfortunately, all too often in the American market, a band is defined by its lead singer who often gets all the press and photo attention. Such has been the case with you. Most people think Jay's name is Jamiroquai. How do you deal with that as a band?

JAM: We're all seeing shrinks! (laughs)

DMA: What about in your videos especially...do you make a conscious effort to show the entire quintet?

JAM: We try to...but we've found that directors often can be asses and have their own ideas of what they want to portray. Often just wanting to work with Jay.

JAY: Sometimes it's a problem, especially when we have our own ideas for a video, but we're fixing that by doing a performance video for the next single. But it's easy for them (the other band mates), they always have the option of dropping out and sleeping in where I always have to get up really early to be there (laughs). It's a real pain in the ass.

DMA: While the Dance World is jamming to trip-hop, techno & house, and most recently drum 'n' bass, you've chosen a more artful, funky-soul and jazz fusion direction. Why is this and how does this direction effect your acceptance in this dance scene?

JAM: We're just doing what we like, and doing for ourselves. At the end of the day, I guess if you were to generalize it, you can say this album has a more modern disco direction.

JAY: ...and house is only fuckin' right next door to that (disco) so I think people are going to come back to the disco and funk style much more now. People are tired of house and want to party out now. Our music is made for that.

DMA: Even in the states, where the general public is highly influenced by radio and MTV play, often listener's first exposure to a new single is through the club mixes that are often a far cry from the original track. I've read that all of you, especially Jay, are not keen on what club mixes do to your original production. Is that accurate?

JAY: That's a situation that we've tried to eradicate this time by writing songs like "Alright" and "Cosmic Girl" that lend themselves more easily to be mixed without altering the original sound. Even if you were deaf and remixed it, there isn't a whole lot you could change about it. Because it's 4-To-The-Floor to it anyway-- because I find it annoying when the record company pushes back the release of a single in favor for waiting on remixes. I mean shit...why work so long on the original track just to have it so

completely altered it sounds like shit. And we record the original track live with real instruments, and by the time we get to live performance, because of the remixes, people are expecting us to be a house band. I find a lack of imagination in these remixes.

DMA: Well, speaking of a lack of imagination, that brings us to David Morales...

JAM / JAY: (very loud laughs) I think I like where the direction of this conversation is going! (laughs)

DMA: As a DJ, I can be very opinionated about remixes, so I can only imagine how you might feel hearing one of your tracks torn apart in the name of commercial success. And listening to the latest David Morales remix of "Cosmic Girl" it's an obvious and mindless rip-off of his successful yet mindless "Space Cowboy" remix.

JAY: Like the way he massacred it ("Cosmic Girl")?

DMA: Not even that...just the way the intro alone is a complete rip-off of the intro for "Space Cowboy."

JAY: Precisely...that annoying "baa baa baa baa baa baa" crap. But I'll tell you what is most annoying, besides that fucking dribble, is he had the audacity of putting DX7's (fake horns) in there and took out our live ones. We had three fucking live horn players on that track. We should have just done the remixes in-house. In fact DJ Darrin (DJ Desire) [sic] has done some great remixes for us, and for the upcoming single "Alright." He's much much better. He actually has an imagination.

DMA: What about "Cosmic Girl"?

JAY: Have you heard the "Cosmic Girl" remixes?

DMA: You mean the Morales mixes?

JAY: Arrgh! Crap. No, the double set that has our remixes. God damn it! You work on remixes yourself and they don't even get released in exchange for that other crap!

[Jay begins to have a heated discussion in the background over remix releases with a record exec. and the exec. offers to send me out a copy of the additional remixes-- Jay is noticeably perturbed.]

DMA: What about remixes for "Alright"?

[As Jay continues to argue in the background...]

JAM: DJ Darrin did a remix and Todd Terry did a remix. We wanted Todd Terry because of what he did for Everything But the Girl. We liked what he did for them, it was a really good remix.

JAY: ...But you know...the guy must of [sic] only taken two hours to remix our track.

[“See man, we shouldn't have that mix fuck on there...it's crap!” Jay exclaims in the background to the record company exec.]

DMA: Don't you guys get a say on what gets released as far as remixes?

JAM: We've always seemed to be away when the final decision is made on them.

[Jay's continued heated remarks concerning the bad remixes makes it almost impossible to hear the other members.]

DMA: I didn't start a fire did I? Maybe we need to change the subject.

JAY: You think you can do a better job on remixes for "Alright"?

DMA: Are you asking me?

JAY: Yeah.

DMA: I'd love to give a try.

JAM: We may just have to ring you up.

JAY: Anything's better than this crap. (Laughs)

DMA: I think we'll get off this subject. (laughs) So Jay, you're 27...how old is everyone else?

[While Derrick answers 32, various ages are yelled out simultaneously (late-20s to 30s) ending with an exclamation of 22 for Toby [surely, he meant to say Stuart --KR]. Once I exclaim, "He's just a puppy" cooing and giggling commence while others exclaim his cuteness and brag about his endowment.]

DMA: Well (laughs) with that said...Being that you are all so young to be producing such accomplished and polished funk and jazz fusion, has your age ever been a hindrance towards being taken seriously?

JAM: No...well quality is timeless and I think good music is accepted coming from any age. Plus, we know what we like and like to listen to...and that comes out in our music. People seem to get that point, plus people are starved for something different, and I think we deliver that.

DMA: The American Record Industry still views Dance Music as the bastard child. Often after the first single reaches enormous success, as did Space Cowboy, record companies often put little push behind future singles...expecting them to ride on the previous single's coattails. How do you make sure each release gets proper promotion?

JAY: We raise hell and twist arms (laughs). Actually we've been very lucky. Sony (and Shore Fire Media) have treated us quite well. They've gotten behind most of what we do, and we're fairly happy.

DMA: I know you guys have to leave, so I'll wrap this up quickly. Since you seem to be breaking new ground in the dance field, combining classic jams with new rhythms...are there any classic artists you'd like to work with in the future?

JAM: We'd love to work with George Clinton, the Maze Brothers, Mica Paris...there's a lot.

Group Interview #2 | YTV February 1997

"Jamiroquai: Canadian Youth Television Interview"

By Exan AuYong

"The Boys Talk About Recent Worldwide Success, The Message In Their Music, Their Footwear & And Getting Some Much-Needed Rest."

Here's what happened when I spoke with a very tired and road-weary Jamiroquai about their latest album, "Travelling Without Moving"...

EXAN: Your first album ["Emergency on Planet Earth"] went straight to the top and debuted at number one on the UK charts, and when you have that sort of beginning, that sort of success right from the beginning, it must be really difficult to try to match that two albums, and now three albums later.

JAY: Yeah, well, I think if you've got some longevity, if you set out to do live music in the first place and that's what you stick to, I don't think it's really that much of a problem. I don't see that we will have a problem writing stuff for years to come.

EXAN: "Travelling Without Moving" has already surpassed platinum sales in the UK?

JAY: Yeah, double platinum.

EXAN: Do you think it has the potential to surpass the sales of "Emergency on Planet Earth"?

JAY: Yeah, I think it will. I think it's going to be better than...I think it has, actually. It's done well everywhere. It's done hugely in Japan.

STUART: It's quadruple platinum there.

JAY: It's good.

STUART: We know that we've got fans there.

JAY: There's a fan base there. So I think the people that went out and bought the last two albums will buy this one. And I think all the time we've got more people...well, some people only know about this one...

EXAN: So when you were going in to record this, did you have that at the back of your mind, like, this is the album that's going to...

DERRICK: We just wanted to do a better album, that was the main thing. 'Cause we knew that the second album ["Return of the Space Cowboy"] was a difficult one to record. But the third one ["Travelling Without Moving"] we had ideas already started, because we were touring and writing, so when it came around to starting the third album [we already had] a few ideas there. Plus, Jay's got a little studio in his house....

(Toby enters)

DERRICK: This is Toby, by the way! So, yeah, this album was easier to record.

JAY: I think we set out to make this one the one. To make this one the benchmark, if you like. I think after three albums you've established yourself enough to have created a benchmark to go on further. To expand beyond what it's done already.

EXAN: The title track is obviously about your love for speed and cars. Why is that the perfect name for this record?

JAY: It's not really all to do with that. I think it's... "Travelling Without Moving" is a statement that encompasses so many different things. But I think for me, in some ways it points to what the alternatives are for transport and power, you know. 'Cause you know I do have a passion for fast cars. But I think there has got to be alternatives. And I think if we look to the future that's what it could be, "Traveling Without Moving". I just have this idea about things on rails and superconductors that don't actually require internal combustion engines and all that, and can actually just run off of magnetism or...

STUART: Or teleportation. That's definitely "Travelling Without Moving".

JAY: (very tired) Or teleportation into the bed!

(they all laugh)

JAY: I could teleport from here, I could travel...

STUART: From here into the bed!

EXAN: How does Jay travel without moving?

JAY: He doesn't. He's always traveling!

(they laugh)

EXAN: Let's talk about technology versus nature. Do you dislike or do you agree with technology? Do you think it contaminates nature? Does it endanger our spiritual growth as a civilization?

STUART: You can have a fusion of the two, can't you? You can have a working relationship between technology and nature, but it's not normally like that, is it?

DERRICK: People always look at the financial side of things, basically. They don't care what they destroy. They dump oil into the sea, and it destroys the plant life or the fish or things like that.

JAY: I think where it becomes dangerous is when you've got people behind closed doors messing around with genes and genetics and stuff, trying to make things grow. It already goes on, you know, foodwise, for our market, the food technology. And I think that's a very unhealthy thing. If we could do things organically it would be a much better way to do things. But we can't do things organically and sustain the population we've got at the moment. [But] there's a lot of technology that doesn't get used that could get used. Like Toby was saying the other day, the 250 year light bulb. But nobody wants a 250 year light bulb because it won't make any money.

STUART: *They've already introduced genetically engineered soya into England. You know, you've got candy bars, and things like that that have had soya in [them], but now...*

JAY: *Everything is shaped for us. Tomatoes are big, red and juicy, and they're shaped just for our market. Apples -- spray it with some stuff and leave it for a while and it will ripen up. They farm salmon, they farm everything. Farm chickens, grow [them] in 36 days instead of 82, all sorts of yummy, lovely things going on...*

EXAN: *Something to think about, that's for sure.*

JAY: *(still tired) I wonder how I could technologically transport us to our beds. That's the future. What we do is we all travel around in our beds. And we don't get up, we're just couch potatoes...*

EXAN: *Let's talk about 70's disco. Did you grow up listening to a lot of that, because to me that's the prominent influence...*

JAY: *No, not really.*

DERRICK: *I did.*

TOBY: *I did.*

JAY: *I grew up listening to Rene & Rinata.*

STUART: *To what?*

JAY: *Rene & Rinata.*

STUART: *Boz Scaggs.*

JAY: *A lot of...*

STUART: *Woody Nelson. (laughs)*

DERRICK: *I grew up listening to a lot of disco stuff.*

JAY: *'Cause you're an old man!*

DERRICK: *'Cause I'm an old man. I'm drawing my pension next month.*

EXAN: *Generally, what did you guys think of disco?*

DERRICK: *Great. I loved it. I still love it.*

JAY: *'Cause it's the best music to have a party to. To get down to, definitely.*

DERRICK: *The music now kind of stems from disco.*

STUART: *Yeah. House. Garage.*

DERRICK: *All that type of stuff. The thing is people are using technology now all the time to try to create a disco vibe, which is pointless, 'cause it was played live then. And that's what we do, we play it live, so we can get that feeling, do you know what I mean? Which is what people like. [We played] a gig last night, everybody was jumping. If we were using machines and things you'd notice the difference, people would just be like hmmm....*

JAY: *It makes it house as well. Once you start using machines it makes it house. All the beats and the rhythms are the same. It's gotta be live. It would be boring if things weren't live.*

EXAN: *I have to ask you this question. What do you think of comparisons to Stevie Wonder?*

JAY: *I think they're old hat. They've all been done before. And I'm not Stevie Wonder. I'm nothing like Stevie Wonder. He's him and I'm me, and that's the way I like it. (points to his sunglasses) Although in these glasses I could get away with it...*

EXAN: *Do you take it as a compliment, or would you rather just not listen to it?*

JAY: *It's great. It's a compliment to an extent, but after a while it's just like, "yeah, sure". It's just a pressure, that's all it is. Everybody expects to come to a Jamiroquai concert and see 'Little Stevie'. Somebody said the other day "you sound like Stevie when he was 12".... I was like, ["whatever"].*

EXAN: *I think what you guys are doing is similar to what Beck does, in that you take a variety of different musical genres and you blend it through the Jamiroquai filter and give it that Jamiroquai signature. How do you make all that gel?*

JAY: *I don't know. After three or four years if you have to think about it you wouldn't be any good at it.*

STUART: *It just comes naturally. It's like one of those things that when you get people together that have very different...*

TOBY: *(interrupting) It's like a chowder. He's the sweet corn, I'm the pepper, you're the salt...*

JAY: *I'm the dish.*

TOBY: *He's the dish.*

STUART: *But you know when you have lots of different people getting together that have various musical backgrounds, and they come together to put something out it's always going to be different.*

DERRICK: *You've got to work the ideas. Whatever idea you get, you've got to work that idea. You might want to put a jazz bit into a funky tune, but to make it work and sound good you've got to work it.*

JAY: *You've got to have people that can play the stuff in the first place. Do you think we're mad?*

EXAN: *Absolutely.*

JAY: *We're completely off our rocker[s]. Kids, if you're listening at home, don't every grow up like us. Really bad.*

EXAN: *Some people say you can tell what a person's all about through their shoes...*

TOBY: *(making fun of Exan's accent) A-boot?*

DERRICK: *A-boot?*

EXAN: *Well, how do you say about?*

STUART: *A-bout. It's all English!*

JAY: *So what you're trying to say is...*

EXAN: *Some people say you can tell what a person's all about through their shoes...*

JAY: *(takes off his shoe and holds it up -- a blue & yellow Adidas runner) So what does [this] say about my personality?*

STUART: Worn.

DERRICK: Haggard. (laughs)

JAY: Haggard. Worn. Old. Tired. Smelly. Stinking.

(Stuart holds up his shoe -- a black and white Nike)

DERRICK: What does [this] say?

STUART: Dirty. Rotten. Could do better. (laughs)

DERRICK: [Mine are] brand new.

STUART: Brand new. Very clean. Tidy.

JAY: Organized.

DERRICK: (to Toby) And his are...

JAY: Well, it's Toby's socks that really give away his personality.

TOBY: Double cadet stripes.

EXAN: Yeah, he's the cleanest.

(they all laugh)

TOBY: Thank you!

STUART: Look at his teeth!

EXAN: His socks are [so] white!

DERRICK: That's 'cause they're new!

STUART: That's 'cause he buys new socks.

TOBY: If you knew how much [flak] I get for my feet being smelly...

EXAN: All that was leading somewhere...

STUART: What was that?

EXAN: I was going to ask Jay, how does your hat represent who you are?

JAY: Well, I like a hat, you know. Hats are a display of my exuberant personality, shining like a star. Isn't that true?

(Stuart gives Jay a raspberry)

JAY: Well, what does Stuart's bald head represent?

STUART: It represents the nothingness of nothing... (they laugh)

(the phone in the room rings)

JAY: *Go away!!!*

(Derrick goes to answer it, meanwhile, Jay seems to be falling asleep)

EXAN: *You look like you're traveling without moving right now.*

JAY: *No, I'm moving without traveling.*

EXAN: *That's a neat trick. Do the rest of you guys know how to do this?*

(Derrick comes back)

DERRICK: *No, I go the conventional way.*

STUART: *I drive. Or walk.*

JAY: *I'm not really here. I'm still in bed. Let's talk about duvets. Nice, fluffy duvets. Mmmm...*

EXAN: *You guys started out before Brit pop became this monolithic musical category. Has the marketplace changed for Jamiroquai at all since Brit pop became this term? 'Cause you guys certainly are not "Brit pop".*

STUART: *Thank you for saying that. Thank you very much.*

JAY: *Really there's not many of us, and there's lots of Brit pop. But somehow I think the old ship will weather it. I think we'll manage to do what we do. Let's face it, let everyone else do it...let them get on with it. There's so many of them doing it, it's so boring at the end of the day, isn't it?*

EXAN: *But have you seen a shift in the marketplace since 1992 and your first record?*

JAY: *Half the record companies put all their funding and money in dance music like ours as opposed to Brit pop. Because that's what they do, you get one [successful] Brit pop [band], and suddenly there's 25 bands that all sound like that. And that's because the industry is full of boring little people that sit behind desks and don't even know the music they're signing, but just look at dollar signs and how much it's going to make the company.*

EXAN: *So as far as you're concerned, it's not affecting Jamiroquai's success?*

JAY: *Not at all. It's just making it easier for us, because everyone's getting bored of [the same kinds of music]. So it's making it easier. So you keep going churning out those dreary boring songs and thanks, thanks very much.*

EXAN: *Now, take a band like Oasis, they're the biggest band in the UK right now. A lot of people accredit their success to their simplistic songs. But Jamiroquai songs are complex. So does that mean that you'll never see that kind of mainstream success?*

DERRICK: *Yeah, probably.*

JAY: *Well, now we're getting down to the mentality of the British public.*

EXAN: *I'm talking about the world, not just [England].*

JAY: *Well, I think we can only go to a line, and we can't go over that.*

STUART: *It's not that complicated!*

JAY: *It's full, [but] it's not that complex.*

STUART: *It's sort of like jazz-fusion...*

JAY: *It's as complex as it has to be to get [us] into the charts.*

EXAN: *I'm just comparing the two...*

JAY: *Theirs is a bit more of a sort of chants. The British have a bit of a propensity rewards the chants. They like to chant along with things.*

EXAN: *How does Jamiroquai describe Jamiroquai's sound?*

JAY: *Sort of sounds like Jamiroquai.*

DERRICK: *Now there's a difficult question. We get asked [that] all the time but we never answer it.*

EXAN: *So Jay, I hear you collect Ferraris.*

JAY: *Who me? Yeah. (laughs)*

STUART: *Why don't you tell the people what kind of Ferrari's you've got?*

JAY: *Well, I've got a 1966 330-GT. Mark 2, and a 1996 355.*

DERRICK: *Can you tell them what other cars you have, out of interest?*

JAY: *I've got a lightweight Lambourghini Diablo, an Aston DB-5, and the rest there's no point telling you about because they're obscure things.*

EXAN: *And where do you keep them all?*

JAY: *They're dotted around London...in various places in London.*

EXAN: *Maybe you should open a museum. Jay's museum of fast cars...*

JAY: *(still sleepy) The museum of the bed.*

EXAN: *We're back to the bed again.*

JAY: *You know back in [the old days] people just slept on the floor, you know. With a rock for a pillow.*

EXAN: *Why the deep passion for fast cars?*

JAY: *Because I like speed. I like going very very quickly. And it enables me to get away...from this crazy life that we're living. I can just step into the car -- lift the door and shut it down behind me, and just let the 525 brake horsepower say the rest.*

EXAN: *Back to that [other] question...how does Jamiroquai describe Jamiroquai's sound?*

JAY: *[Ask that one] to Stuart...*

STUART: *Pass the puck to Derrick...*

DERRICK: *And I'll pass the puck to Toby...*

TOBY: *The futility of mortality.*

STUART: *And there you have it.*

JAY: *You're always so full of this poetic clap-trap. Describe the music.*

DERRICK: *It's a jazz-funky-Latin...*

STUART: *Extravaganza. It's a gumbo. It's a big melting pot of everything.*

EXAN: *Is this what it's like in the recording studio [with you guys]?*

JAMIROQUAI: *No.*

DERRICK: *This is timid.*

STUART: *This is us being polite, basically.*

JAY: *We're trying really hard. Kids, you've got to understand, when you get to our age...sleep and rest become really, really important. We've been on the road now for four weeks, and I never really got time to see home. And I just want to go home. I want to go see my mum.*

STUART: *Click your heels three times...*

JAY: *I want to go and venture down the yellow brick road that is the Atlantic [Ocean]. I want to be on [an airplane] with some lovely stewardess who will take care of me -- coffee or tea, sir?*

EXAN: *Click your heels.*

(he does)

JAY: *It's not happening.*

EXAN: *Do you miss your mom?*

JAY: *I don't spend enough time [with her]. I'm sick of living out of a suitcase. I'd like to go home and unpack my suitcase and actually put the things into drawers. There are actually drawers, clothes do go in the drawers, but [my] clothes never make that transition. I never get them from the case to the drawer...after a while you can't ground yourself. You get tired and irritable.*

EXAN: *But you didn't answer my question! Do you miss [your] mom?*

JAY: *Yes! Of course I miss [my] mum. That's what I mean. I never get to see my mum. In fact, [I don't know] if she's alive and living and working...(smiles) I don't know where she is...*

EXAN: *Awww!*

JAY: *Cue music!*

(the others start to sing some sappy music)

Sub-Section #2: Jay Kay Interviews

JK Interview #1 | Pulse!
August 1999
"Leave My Badgers Alone!" By Tom Lanham
"JK Lets Loose His Opinions Of The World."

Leave My Badgers Alone!

It's a long way down. Forty-seven vertigo-filled stories, to be exact. But Jay Kay isn't frightened, not in the least. He bounds out of his hotel suite chair, scampers over to the wall-length picture window, and--thwack!--leaps up onto the sill, boinking into the thick plate glass in the process. Smudging his nose against the window, he stares across at the monolithic Empire State Building a few blocks away, then peers down over the ledge, rapt, invoking the old "How do you make a hit on Broadway?" gag. "I'm thinkin' about it now," he murmurs in his street-savvy English accent. "How hard you'd hit the ground--Fuck! That hot concrete! And all the things you'd hit on the way--Ow! Ooo! Eee! Ow!" Suddenly, Kay spins on his Nike-ed heels to address his tour manager, who's just sauntered into the room to bum a cigarette. "Where's my album cover art, man? I wouldn't mind having another look at that."

By Tom Lanham
Photograph by Midori Tsukagoshi

*"The worst thing is, I end up going back to England, to my 75 acres of glorious, beautiful, pesticide-free, totally organic heaven with a gorgeous Georgian house, and I think 'Well, I'm **here** now—let the rest of the world do what it wants to do.'"*

Dutifully, the associate shuffles off to retrieve said photographs, slated to adorn the foldout booklet for *Synkronized* (Work Group), Kay's fourth--and latest--effort under the dancefloor-igniting, cat-in-the-hat-chapeaued alias of Jamiroquai. (The disc follows '96's Grammy-winning, octuple-platinum U.S. breakthrough *Travelling Without Moving* and tandem innovative clip for the "Virtual Insanity" single, which netted four MTV Video Awards.) The mission takes a little while;



the shots are in another hotel wing entirely. So the chatty 29-year-old singer/conceptualist has plenty of time to wax rhapsodic on a passionate (and trademark-familiar) humanity-is-headed-for-extinction rant that jumps from the construction in view ("Every single thing that you can see out there, from that digital clock to the Empire State Building, has come off the planet, been made from raw materials from the planet by these little ants, which is all we are"); to the current Kosovo crisis ("In England we've just spent 750 million pounds on a Millennium Dome, celebrating 2,000 years of Christianity, and then we go to war"); to the viruslike perpetuation of McDonalds franchises ("Until they can see a big fat 'M' from space, they'll keep building 'em--keep chopping down rainforests so you can walk in and, for a dollar, eat something that makes you feel ill afterwards"); and then to TV commercials he's just seen for lawn-friendly weed-killing sprays ("Think! Where does that go, you fools? The fucking chemical drains down into the water, and then you drink it, you dumb fucking shits! We're just getting consumed by this huge corporate dream").

And Kay--who's been reiterating this same warning-sign message since his *Emergency on Planet Earth* debut in '93 (Columbia)--has even come up with a short-term solution: "All you have to do is get away from this," he gestures expansively toward the New York skyline, "and go sit outside in the country and watch the insects, the birds, the animals. It's fascinating, and so much better for your psyche and soul. People just have no idea of the devastating consequences of ignoring nature." Otherwise, he fears, we're spiraling into a tailspin of "genetically modified food that'll be killing us, and finally, a race of mutant people."

Kay's friend has returned, and handed him a large leather portfolio. "I've gotten to the point with my head where it's all just too mad," the musician sighs, unfolding the binder and assembling a set of verdant pastoral pictures on the dinner table. "And the worst thing is, I end up going back to England, to my 75 acres of glorious, beautiful, pesticide-free, totally organic heaven with a gorgeous Georgian house, and I think 'Well, I'm here now--let the rest of the world do what it wants to do.'" He points to the photos, each one featuring a six-foot mirror cutout of Jamiroquai's signature Buffalo Man logo propped against an idyllic landscape, here a placid lake, there a leafy forest. "And here's my organic vegetable garden!" Kay taps one with his finger. "And this is my home studio, right over there. Wind, sky, sun, water--nature. It's perfectly beautiful synchronization [hence the new album title, he chuckles]--I feel like this is my part of the universe here. All this is--" and he takes a deep can't-believe-it breath before continuing "--my land!"

The 30-room estate cost the artist 1.5 million pounds sterling; his studio annex, which required the drawn-out legal wrangling of a council permit, set him back another 600 thou. Total sum spent, in U.S. dollars: nearly \$4 million. A small price to pay, Kay believes, for the smooth soulful sessions that resulted in *Synkronized*. Instead of hastily compiling a list of tracks to be recorded in bustling London--the previous Jamiroquai *modus operandi*--Kay and backing band would fly into Heathrow on concert breaks, cab it straight to the home studio, and strike while the iron was hot in two-, three-song increments. "You do that five times in and out of a tour," Kay beams. "And you've got yourself an album." Plus, he was still able to follow his usual sunset routine--patrolling the Jamiroquai grounds with his pet German shepherd Luger to ward off pesky badger poachers. If it's not peaceful on the property already, Kay cackles, Luger will take care of the problem in short order: "You see 42 teeth of his scissorbite coming at you, you shit yourself! So leave my badgers alone!"



K

ay hasn't come this far via scissorbite alone. In person, he radiates a warm, kooky charisma that's part Deepak Chopra, part sly Oliver Twist. And it's that urchiny edge that's most evident today, as the unshaven, long-haired lad--in his rumpled cords and baggy Ferrari shirt--scurries to and fro while talking, looking every bit as animated and whisker-twitching inquisitive as Templeton the rat from Charlotte's Web.

On record, Kay is just as raffishly beguiling. Emergency (which debuted at #1 on the U.K. charts) made it clear from the beginning: This eco-conscious, skateboarding son of a British jazz diva had a fluid, aquamarine crooning style that was eerily evocative of (and eventually endorsed by) the majestic Stevie Wonder. Plucking his moniker (and horned Buffalo/Medicine Man logo) from spiritual sources--Kay loved to JAM as much as he respected the IROQUOIS Indians--he defiantly swam against the thrumming techno/jungle current with a Rose Royce-revivalist funk sound that included didgeridoo, campy EWF-school keyboards, and a slap'n'pluck bass backbeat straight outta Graham Central Station. Which is perhaps why the '70s-playful "Virtual Insanity" and its attendant Fred-Astaire-on-the-ceiling-inspired video caught on during a wave of K-Tel glitter ball nostalgia.

Synkronized is, in a nutshell, more of the good-vibe same. It opens on an orchestrated Chic-kitsch hip-shaker called "Canned Heat," which is also the leadoff single. Thumpy bass propels "Planet Home" (another ecological treatise from a concerned Kay); a down'n'dirty

horn/Hammond-driven "Black Capricorn Day" taps into the same sinister creep that darkened Wonder's "Superstition"; the instrumental "Destitute Illusion" spot-welds trancey melodies to an AWB-echoed rhythm; and the didgeridoo-pulsed "Supersonic" glides over a handclap-sampled landscape like one of the many expensive sports cars Kay loves to collect. Although the lyrics may, as in "Virtual Insanity," sketch grim panoramas of pre-millennial dread, Kay's ultimate message seems to be much simpler: Stop worrying, shut up and dance.

Kay flinches at the "retro" tag with which he's been saddled. Don't call his music cheesy, either. "Because there's a point where cheese is no longer cheese, where cheese becomes meat, if you know what I mean," he grumbles, puffing on his umpteenth jittery cigarette of the day. "I just like fucking disco music--that's all. Musically, I'm into everything and anything, whatever sounds good. And in particular, what I wanted on this album was for it to be more friendly toward the remixer with the structure of the beats going on behind it, which are very four-to-the floor. I've had five approaches this year from people wanting to use tracks off album one and two, and they've sped 'em up and done little groovy things with 'em. So it's the same with, say, 'Supersonic'--that's what I call our version. If you gave that to somebody like Liam [Howlett] from the Prodigy, they're gonna massacre it, make it huge. So this album is like the starter, and I'd like to see people come along later and give me the main course."

Kay wants to keep Jamiroquai "organic--I'm not prepared to go fully machine on the whole thing." And when it comes to his surreal songwriting process, "organic" doesn't quite do justice. Take "Canned Heat," for instance, mentions the maestro, who rarely plays any instruments but hum/trills each intricate nuance of arrangement to the appropriate musician until a number takes shape. "This is how I came up with the tune," he grins, jumping up from his chair yet again and snapping his fingers dramatically. "Ba-da-ba-doo-um-booo-dooo! Once I've finished that, then the strings--zeeeeew-znn-znn-zeeeen! I'll sit next to the string guy and sing that." Don't even get the guy started on the punchy brass section. "I can hear the whole song in my head, exactly where I want each little bit, little pieces. That's how I've always written music--it all comes from me humming, humming what I want to hear." He pauses to scratch his shoulder-length mane. "Most people would probably feel stupid doing that, but I'm so used to making music like that, it's easy."

Which subtly hints at this mansion-bound millionaire's hardscrabble childhood. He had no formal musical education; he picked up all his tricks of the soulful trade from trailing along to his mother's concerts. He left home at 16, resorted to petty theft, and only a few years ago was squatting in an abandoned taxi depot, with no electricity and plenty of holes in the roof. One drum kit and one single later, he was being wooed into an eight-album deal with Sony U.K. to the shocking tune of nearly \$2 million. So it makes perfect sense that he's antsy in New York, feeling just a tad fenced in. Kay looks longingly at the cover shots again, homesick. "I have my own lake and a double moat--it's one of the few double-moated houses in England, and it's all fresh water. There was a Roman site there, and the original owner of my house was Stephen, King of England, the half brother of Norman the Conqueror. And it was also an English civil war stronghold that Charles I visited on several occasions, when it was owned by a chap named Sir John Denham, who was an ardent Royalist. So the Roundheads captured it, but then the Royalists captured it back again. I mean, my garden alone was actually laid out and designed way back in 1782!"

Kay is staring straight ahead at the Empire State Building. But it doesn't appear to be registering on his retina any more. Thinking about his estate and poacher-trouncing Luger makes him feel selfish, he says. Like he should be putting his money where his mouth is and getting out there to save our doomed planet. "There are so many things we can do," he sighs, "but I just don't know where to start sometimes. I think what I'm waiting for is a time in my life when I've done all this music stuff and I can pay a bit more attention to the world. When I wrote Emergency on Planet Earth, I was all young and naive and I actually thought that it would all work out. That I'd be able to do something."

The man they call Jamiroquai quietly puts his pictures back into their portfolio. "But then I realized just how big this world really was--"

Tom Lanham, who wrote about Kula Shaker and Manic Street Preachers in the June issue of Pulse!, lives in San Francisco.

Jamiroquai's Jay

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**JK Interview #2 | Vibe
August 1999**

"JK NY" By James Hunter

"A Detailed Interview With JK On Growing Up And The True Origin Of The Name 'Jamiroquai'."



More than just a Stevie Wonder enthusiast, Jamiroquai's wonder frontman, Jay Kay, knows a little something about fly birds, fast cars, and the bass-booming beats that comprise his gangsta boogie. James Hunter peeps the big-hatted dudes delicious musical English muffins.

Jay Kay would rather be at home with his dog. On an afternoon when the late-April sky is as sunny and sharp as the 29-year-old Englishman's rapid-fire conversation, Kay climbs into a chauffeured van in front of his Manhattan hotel. He's headed downtown to see some "old motorcars." He says those words affectionately, with the regard of someone who himself owns several vintage Ferraris that he treats "like children."

*He is in town to discuss *Synkronized* (WORK/Sony), his band Jamiroquai's new album, disco-boogie fire as fine and realized as anyone has recently rekindled. Kay feels brilliant today, he says, but worries about his pup, a longhaired German shepherd named Luger. "He's in a teenage, naughty, I'm-going-to-take-your-best-sofa-and-rip-it-to-pieces mood," Kay says. "He's angry with me at the moment because I went away for two days, and now I'm gone again. Gets into a real grump." Kay has long waited -in addition to Tigger and Fritz, his two cats- a wellbred and loyal-trained canine, "a proper dog," as he explains.*

*Traffic whirls around him. Shit is happening. There's the slight argument with his girlfriend, Denise Van Oughton [sp], the former host of *The Big Breakfast*, England's youth-conscious TV wake-up show. There's the continued fallout from the October departure of Stuart Zender, Jamiroquai's original bassist, which caused Kay, keyboardist/songwriter Toby Smith, and drummer Derrick McKenzie to start rerecording *Synkronized*, scrapping three already finished tunes. Then there are the usual pre-album minidramas about artwork, track sequences, and interviews.*

"Denise is out shopping," Kays says, "probably cursing me as I speak because I was moaning about this, that, and the other thing. I've got so much going on, what with people taking legal action about tunes you wrote." The reference, intentionally oblique, is in regard to Zender's leave-taking. "It's a bit difficult, the last thing you need. You're thrown a

metal rod in the spokes of your bicycle, making you land six feet in the air, sprawled on the pavement with a bleeding nose. But," he adds, "this album has so much momentum, the steel rod may snap like a chopstick."

Little interferes with Jay Kay's high spirits today. He's proud of Synkornized, Jamiroquai's fourth and album, a dudless affair whose songs like "Canned Heat" and "Planet Home" unveil an unstodgy new maturity, a pruned-back yet fuller-seeming sound, and, on a standout like "Supersonic" (Kay hopes Busta Rhymes will remix it), a nod to U.K. dance culture that's not just your usual piled-on beats per second. The album was recorded in the fast-emerging studio in Kay's new country house 40 miles northwest of London. Like Jamiroquai's previous albums, it is meticulously done, the work of musicians who, as drummer McKenzie says, are "reliable" and offer "timeless music" that provides fans "good value for the money."

Recording at home has given the music a new, unruffled confidence. "It's phatter," Kays says of this vibe. "I'm not waving and moaning over everything. I've kept things sweet and simple. It's a dance record." And indeed, Synkronized is where Jay Kay finds his own voice as a singer. "If you get on a subject, any subject, he does tend to go on for half an hour," says Smith. "Here he deliberately tried to keep his singing more concise, and not go on and on, like his talking, his big soliloquies."

Emergency on Planet Earth (Sony, 1993) and The Return of the Space Cowboy (Sony, 1995), the band's first two albums, did well at home and internationally. "Virtual Insanity," the hit song and much-played video from 1996's Travelling Without Moving (WORK/Sony), broke them in the States, winning Grammys and MTV Awards. And people still said the Jamiroquai dude sounded like Stevie Wonder -even though Kay frequently let loose with comments like, as he says now, "Well, when you mention Stevie Wonder you mention someone who can play drums and keyboards, a fucking genius. Which I'm not. There's a great difference. Everybody's influenced so far. You cannot just copy... you cannot just sound like Stevie Wonder."

Kay takes off on a few bars of "Planet Home," as he is wont do in conversation and always does when he's figuring out string or brass parts with his collaborators. Dressed today in Nike Air Maxes, old brown cords, and an orange fake-fur pullover seemingly custom-made from the coat of a neon bear, Jamiroquai's lead dude is on.

He chats: "Classical music is high on my list right now. Tchaikovsky. Rachmaninoff. You go through musical tastes, don't you? And, believe it or not, opera. But that's got something to do with driving Ferraris." He howls. "It's like Stilton cheese -I never used to eat Stilton cheese. I never used to drink Port either. And now I'm heading for gout, desperately trying to entertain gout in my left foot. No more of those boogie videos -he's only got one leg now, shit." He turns thoughtful. "I love things to be proper. You know, if you're going to do something, do it properly." He occasionally smokes. He doesn't miss a thing. His mother was a jazz singer capable of brilliant imitation, whose style Kay compares to Lena Horne's.

"I've always been car-mad," he says, his head turned by an old Rolls that has just passed by. "It comes from when my mum was gigging, actually being in a car all the time. I was brought up in the back of a car. People say, 'What do you do in your spare time?' I say, when there's spare time I jump in the car and go to Scotland or Wales, to open roads and countryside. It's how I ease off."

He lived his first two years in Manchester, the survivor of identical twins born to Englishwoman Karen Kay and a Portuguse father who has never been present in his life. "My mum took me around the world with her," he recalls. "She used to do a lot of gigs in South Africa, Nigeria, Las Vegas, places like that -that mix of '70s entertaining. Then I lived just about everywhere in England, because she would do summer stage stuff -we'd be in Devon, then Suffolk, then come to London then and again. I only moved to London when I was 13. That's when life started going downhill."

In London, Kay was sent to boarding school in Leicestershire, which he found useless. "I had a hard time, was picked on by teachers, was accosted," he says. "I'm very much one of those people who's a bit too much of a free spirit. I've always felt that my place as a human being was on this earth, and I'm no higher or lower than anyone else." As a result, despite his mother's wish that he become a lawyer, Kay left school at 16.

Back in London, he picked up skateboarding. "You lived to skate. I was really into my puffing stage then," he says, "my big hashish stage. Everybody wanted old [Levi's] 501s then, so we'd go out and rob piles of old 501s and walk out with this parachute bag and go sell them off to all the 'hip kids' from Kensington and Chelsea. Then we'd go back to Ealing, sit on the cree, buy ourselves a quarter puff, a couple cans of beer, and skate."

Then things got out of hand. "I was getting into trouble, petty crime. I wasn't robbing banks, but I was, you know, being a naughty boy. Like most people are. Bad company, etc." One particular "terrible day" eventually put Kay on a different course. "I had three fights. Someone tried to stab me. And there'd been a burglary. I'd just been in the wrong place at the wrong time, but I was accused of burgling the place. And then I was gassed in the face by somebody who had a canister, which was bloody painful. It was a hard time."

Traffic stops for what seems like an hour as loud fire trucks and police take over and command the streets. Two French girls carrying enormous knapsacks make their way through the snafu. They seem like the kind of girls who, only a couple of months ago, told an American visiting Paris, "I like the Rolling Stones. I like Puff Dad-dy. I like Chet Ba-ker. And I love Jamiro-quai."

But Kay is back in the early '90s. "I locked myself away for six months," he remembers. "I wrote lyrics, tunes, came up with a logo, the name, the script for the name. And so I went from the logo and hat, to being this kind of real boogie warrior." Then he had a junk epiphany. "I'd come in one night and seen this spaghetti western playing on TV. I was stoned. There were the horses," -Kay imitates the sound of jetting hoofbeats- "the Indians, and the horns. I could see that all these elements were so like my hat!" Instantly, he conflated the name of a Vietnam-era helicopter (the Bell 1H2V Iroquois), the Native-American reference ("I did my reading and found out it was part of the six tribes who hang around the New York region"), and the notion of jamming to get to that fairly magical made-up name, Jamiroquai. "I could almost see it then," Kay recalls, "Ladies and gentleman, Jamiroquai!" In no time flat, so did London pop bizzers. A showcase or two, and Kay signed to a publishing deal with EMI, followed by a large eight-album record contract with Sony.

Rappers dig Jamiroquai. The band has had five requests for sample clearance from the first two albums alone. And on Supa Dupa Fly (Elektra, 1997), Missy Elliot sampled "Morning Glory," a Miles David-like meditation from The Return of the Space Cowboy. This thrills Kay. "For someone like me, a little white guy from England, that's a real thing." He has come a ways. Right now, he's designing a line for -instead of stealing- Levi's. Jackets, he predicts, fashioned around panels. "Something functional, decent, sporty, something bulletproof." He's toying with a prototype.

Finally, Kay arrives at his destination in Greenwich Village, Cooper Classics Ltd., where one walks upstairs to a series of large, connected garages. Kay is met at the door by Elliot Cuker, the firm's president, a smiling guy who's impressed by Kay's knowledge of vintage Mercedes-Benzes ("Sly Stallone had this one") and Bentleys ("I had one that belonged to Perry Ellis, after he died"). Cuker is fond of saying things like, "I believe Prince Charles owns..." and telling stories about Yoko Ono once not only buying an old car but also hiring its driver. Kay likes a couple of things: a baronial '61 300D Mercedes with 84,000 miles, luscious red-leather interior, and a wide white walls, for one, about which he exclaims, "This car needs love!" But he falls hardest for a black Shelby Mustang from the '60s, complete with stringy fiberglass hood-fasteners (it's the most Italian-looking thing Cuker has to offer).

Back in the streets, someone recognizes Kay as the Jamiroquai dude, the self-described "cheeky chappie" who's "always grinning, always pulling those cheeky, nutty, funky moves like bloody Robin Williams on acid" and who's now

famously a driver of flashy cars. Riding back uptown, he says the guy asked him when Jamiroquai's new record was coming out and what it was like. "I told him," Kay says, "that every track sounds like Stevie Wonder." But he knows he's got an album, this time, to put away that hoary old charge soundly to rest. So he just howls with laughter.

JK Interview #3 | CDNow

July 1999

"In Synk" By Aidin Vaziri

"Brief Interview With JK On The Album & The Media."

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 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.



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.

**JK Interview #4 | San Francisco Gate
June 27th 1999**

"Q & A With Jason Kay" By Aidin Vaziri

*"Some basic QnA with a SF Gate reporter before the July 4th show comes up.
Weird Answers to Easy Q's."*

Jason Kay is due on stage in a few minutes, but something has put him in a bad mood. It's hard to imagine what. The wiry 29-year-old singer for the modern-day disco crusaders Jamiroquai, Kay has come a long way from his life on the streets: Having sold over 11 million albums, he owns a fleet of expensive sports cars, dates knockout British television personality Denise Van Outen and recently acquired the 11-bedroom Horsenden Manor in the Buckinghamshire countryside, which covers 70 acres and includes a natural lake, waterfall and river. Kay, who plays a free show at Union Square next Sunday to kick off Jamiroquai's American tour, confesses that the less-than-positive press he has been getting for his latest album, "Synkronized," is the source of his duress. We wonder if he's brought it on himself.

Q: On MTV you recently said all Americans think you're a "headless donkey on acid." Why?

A: I don't know. I can't recall saying I was a "headless donkey on acid."

Q: I'm quite certain that's what you said.

A: Did I really? There I go again. I don't know. God knows why I said that. I mean, I am a bit of a headless donkey on acid when I'm onstage. That could be quite dangerous.

Q: Why is it every article I read about you just talks about your house, cars and girlfriend?

A: 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.

Q: What did it say?

A: 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.

Q: Has a homeless person ever tried to bite you?

A: No, 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.

Q: It's not right, is it?

A: 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.

Q: Maybe you should have stayed homeless.

A: 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 the 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 laughingstock 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?

Q: They're just jealous because you have a house.

A: You know it, man. There's too much of that in the world these days. People shouldn't look at other people to see what they've got, because you don't have to go through the s-- they have to go through.

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

A: 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.

Q: Since you have a house with 11 bedrooms now, do you have theme rooms like the Caveman Room or the Jungle Room?

A: That's what I'm doing. I'm down to four bedrooms now. Every room has something different in it. That's the beauty of it. After a while you need to find a space, a corner of the earth that smiles at you. I recently went into a steam room in a hotel, and I thought that was a good idea.

Q: Do you ever pee in the waterfall?

A: No, I never pee in the waterfall. I tell you what, though, I'm looking forward to coming over to San Francisco.

Q: What does that have to do with anything?

A: I'm just really excited about playing in the open air. We've got a killer set. The other thing is, the first few gigs here, the album wasn't released and people didn't know the new stuff. But by the time we get to you guys it will be hot. It will be really cooking.

**JK Interview #5 | Raygun
June 1999**

“Manor Astroman” By Dean Kuipers

“A very long and detailed interview with JK. Probably one of the best interviews I have seen him give with a well informed reporter.”



***Religion, ecology, space, the funk: it all shines together in Jamiroquai's planetary disco.
Dean Kuipers gets down on the farm. Photography by Rankin.***

The lord of Horsenden Manor arises a late as new summer sun pours through broken clouds over the rolling english countryside of High Wyckham.

The 72-acre estate, equidistant between London and Oxford, requires constant defense; lately his work days have ended at sunrise. Attorneys and barristers drop packages at all hours, threatening action regarding his recent split with long-trusted ally. His handlers badger him with urgent strategy questions about the approaching summer campaign. Newsmongers are twitching for more details about the busty blonde showgirl hustled in from London after dark. The accountants need their own room in the Georgian manse for their mountains of ledgers. His days erupt with chaos not unlike his dreams, which boom with the English Civil War that ended here relatively recently in 1680, and which has left cannon balls rusting in the property's double moats.



Greeting the day, the lord of the manor cups the telephone to a three-day beard and lights a cigarette. The farm manager hails his young boss, sitting alone in the kitchen of the three-story, circa 1680 house, needing the guidance and more money for the football-pitch-sized organic garden that feeds the estate. Tractors buzz past the windows, followed by men in Wellingtons. In a kitchen older than the colonies, the house manager lays out steaming tea. Pulling on old sneakers and an Adidas jacket, the young reprobate crunches past long, mossy equipment sheds to inspect his men laying new gravel drive to the orchard, alongside the inner moat.

Staring into the cold artesian water, the ambitious Englishman wonders why men like him lust for castles. He's risen quite literally from the street to become landed gentry, owner of an estate once deeded to the Archbishop of Canterbury. But has he beaten the class system, or has it beaten him? Right now his bronchitis wants a doctor. And the bills are mounting. So he's forced to committ more and more of his resources to a distant dream; conquering America.

He ducks through the tin-roofed equipment shed into a hidden but ultramodern sidehouse and installs himself in a spaceship-like 48-track studio to begin another day. Making disco records.

Before a word is spoken, Jason Kay, the 29-year-old lord of the manor, wants to hear a new mix of "Canned Heat," the lead radio track off Synkronized, the first album in three years by his band, Jamiroquai. He slaps in a DAT. As a perfect emulation of late 1970s high energy disco booms out of the studio monitors at near-concert volume, Kay's mood modulates with it, higher and higher.

"Canned Heat" -a high heeled, "Boogie Wonderland," cocaine-on-the-mirrorball loop affair- is destined to be the soundtrack to Summer 1999. The song's pumping keyboard bass and shout-out chorus -dance!- makes it very clear that Synkronized has only tightened Kay's intensely purist love affair with the jazz-funk/disco era. It's only fitting pre-millennial salute to the end of a century most recently fixated on the excessive "me decade," with mindless party lyrics mawking:

*"Nothin' left for me to do but... dance!
All these hard times I'm goin' through... dance!
Got canned heat in my heels tonight baby... dance!"*



The song fast forwards us to the nagging issues of cultural ownership and appropriation vs. tribute that have dogged Jamiroquai since its 1992 underground classic, "When You Gonna Learn" (on indie label Acid Jazz). Saying that Kay sings like Stevie Wonder is old news. But Kay has responded by making a

stylistic shift -not away from the narrow slice of R&B; and singular vocal style that is his obsession, but closer to it. Since 1996's Travelling Without Moving, Jay Kay's met his hero, recieved his blessing, and proceeded to take a DNA sampling for more accurate replication. Kay's fourth album draws its sounds very precisely identifiable production styles (70s Motown and Philly International disco), and vocal inflections (Wonder, roughly between 1971's Where I'm Coming From and 1976's Songs in the Key of Life, but closest to 1973's Innervisions). As such, Synkronized can only be regarded as a purist tribute. If you're the sort who knows you can't knock success.

The fact that this is done without either the irony or public reverence that has defined '90s appropriation -and with compelling results- makes Kay an extraordinarily 21st Century character. He is rootless, remorseless, and clear-eyed to a fault, but not even he knows who or what he is.

"Let's face it, the irony of the black/white thing," he shouts over the music in his slightly-lisping accent. "I'm the one of the few artists on Black Entertainment Television. Black magazines want me -they never had a white guy on the cover. It's just strange. So where does it leave me? A confused bloke. Hi, I'm a confused bloke. Who am I?"

Confused bloke, maybe, but hardly clueless. Jay Kay is disarmingly charismatic in person, and it's clear he's ushered someone else's music into his own pocket by simply believing it's the best music there is, and that if the music's originator's aren't going to take their creation any farther, then someone else might as well. Of course, Kay has a veritable tradition of such appropriation to back him up; British national treasures like Mick Jagger, John Lennon, Eric Burdon, Van Morrison, Georgie Fame, Rod Stewart, Dusty Springfield, Roger Daltrey, Steve Marriott, Heatwave, Paul Young, Paul Weller (and many more) would be nothing without their direct Black American antecedents.

When the track is finished, Jay runs around the studio house greeting the gathered dozen or so people, lighting the place up with a joke and a smile. As far as one can tell, he's not even stoned, which is his usual approach to dealing with the press. He's sincere, witty, and prone to hilariously off-kilter ramblings that reveal a native intellect starved for challenge. It's not hard to see how he does so well with women; when his relationship with lingerie designer Tamsin Greenhill ended in 1998, he soon took up with former TV breakfast show host Denise Van Outen, who might be best known to American men for her appearances on the cover of bloke mags like Loaded.

Kay stalks back into the control room and begs off, explaining that he's ill and doesn't want to talk. Then he proceeds to talk nonstop for two hours.



Asked if his music is a purist tribute to '70s jazz-funk, he immediately snaps: "I want something that makes me dance. I want to see people boogie to it. It's the only music I can sing. All that indie kind of stuff, thrashing guitars, it's not my scene. 'Cause my mum was doing Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Washington, that's her game. And my game, obviously, is an extension of that."

On Synkronized, Jay's game is dance, plain and simple. Aside from "Canned Heat," standout tracks include: "Planet Home," a didgeridoo house romp with a breakout funk bass; "Supersonic," a junked-up arrangement that recalls Wonder's "Contusion"; the Isaac Hayes-meets-Quincy Jones feel of "Soul Education"; and the "Off the Wall" redux of "Where Do We Go From Here?"

"You just do what you can, don't you?" he adds, sidestepping larger issues. "You do what you're good at. I just want to hone it down. I bought the house just so I could do that, really."

But honing it down to what, exactly? The most glaring gap between Jay's latest songs and the '70s music he admires -that of Wonder, Curtis Mayfield, Marvin Gaye, George Clinton's Parliament/Funkadelic, Sly Stone, Gil Scott-Heron, Isaac Hayes, Miles Davis's jazz-funk, Roy Ayers, Donald Byrd, Pleasure (a semi-obscure noted Kay fave), even Quincy Jones' more refined productions- is that most of their best work was charged with ghetto consciousness. All of it sprouted, directly or not, from a synergy fueled by the '60s civil rights movement, the Vietnam war, the JFK, RFK, MLK, and Malcolm X assassinations, inner-city riots, student uprisings, the Black Panthers, and a potent mixture of new-found community potential and cynical awareness of how that potential would be limited by the powers that be.

"I think there was a lot more directions in what people had to fight for, then," Kay admits, minding the gap. "For us, as youth, I think it's really difficult. I don't know what the fuck we're fightin' for. We've just started World War III [in Kosovo], very likely. Disco has an energy in it and you can't recreate that now because we live in a very cold, clinical fuckin' world and I'm really against it. Test tube fuckin' babies. It's what 'Virtual Insanity' [mega-hit off 1996's Travelling Without Moving] is about. You want to clone people. You're gonna mess about with the planet. Ever watch the first Mad Max film, with all the bikers and everything? You're gonna end up with that, a mutant sub-race. You are!"

"I'm a bit of a technophobe, to be fair," he acknowledges. "Like with the genetics stuff. How do you stop crazy scientists doing crazy things behind crazy doors?" He points out at the giant garden. "Everything we've got here is organic, man. We've got our own food here."

Acknowledging that his music feeds off a retrospective familiarity, Kay relates that more to the original music's strengths than sheer nostalgia: "Are they gonna do that house music in 20 years? Are they gonna do that with jungle? No way!" On the other hand, he notes, "I've had three requests already for artists to speed up 'Blow Your Mind' [off 1993's Emergency on Planet Earth]."

Even Stevie Wonder seems to agree. In interviews and appearances, Wonder has at least extended the professional courtesy not to dis the lad in public. The two finally encountered one another in the flesh at the '97 taping of Babyface's MTV "Unplugged" session in New York, and an admittedly nervous Kay got the boost of a lifetime.

Wonder softly sang "Virtual Insanity"'s chorus in Kay's ear and confessed, "That tune -I really like that tune."

"I was nearly in tears I was so chuffed," says Kay. "'cause I thought: fuckin' eight years of work and people say, 'You want to be like him.' And he actually digs the shit."

Wonder later suggested in print that he had an unrecorded song for Kay, and allegedly gave him permission to record Innervisions' "Golden Lady." That same year, at the Brit Awards, Jamiroquai was up for a video nomination and Wonder was one of the presenters. "Stevie Wonder's on the stage, so the camera man is sliding around to my table," Kay recounts. "I just chip. Why? Can't I be me?"



"I ain't nothin' like Stevie Wonder. I can't play the keyboard. I can't play the drums. I can't play fuckin' anything. I just use my mouth to get it out."

*If Kay sounds defensive, he is. With the release of *Synkronized*, he's bracing for yet another pounding by the infamously mercurial British music press. From the moment his records it, many critics were outraged to find out Jay Kay was white, and set up a howling perhaps best typified by an infamous headline from London's *The Evening Standard*: "Exposing a Double Pop Scam. J.K.: young, stupid and white." A certain rival band (also white) plastered London with stickers bearing that message and the outline of the oversized Dr. Seuss-ish hats Kay favored at the time (which had him dubbed "the cat in the hat"), mocking the Jamiroquai "Buffalo Man" or "Medicine Man" logo featured on the album covers. The *Melody Maker* went so far as to sponsor a bitterly cynical contest challenging UK housewives to tell the difference between recordings by Kay and Wonder.*

*"People want to bring you down," Kay says, acknowledging that England is perhaps one of the worst places in the world for the concept known in German as *schadenfreud* (pleasure in the misery of others). "They're hooligans over here. One minute I'm flavor of the month and it's genius, and the next minute it's shit."*

Jason Kay was born in London, in 1969, to jazz vocalist Karen Kay and a Portuguese man whom Jay has never met -though for years he's carried his picture in his wallet. As a professional singer, Kay's mother maintained a rigorous schedule, gigging for over 30 years in nightclubs all over the world and even hosting her own TV variety show for a period in the '70s. Everywhere she went, Jay went, and the two formed an inexorable bond.

"I was a twin," Kay explains, revealing one possible source of his quasi-spiritual tendencies. "My twin brother died [at six months], so she took me around the world. People said, 'You won't be able to take a kid around the world.' She was doing three shows in Las Vegas, last one at five in the morning. Shit like that. Hardcore. Then comin' in and I'm goin' [cries like a baby], 'Waaa waaa waaa!' I was very close to my Mom. Still am.

"Half these people you seen on the TV who think they're great singers, she could wipe the floor with them. She could wipe the floor with me, and she's 51."

Karen and Jay moved to London for good when Jay was 13, settling in the unglamorous Ealing district. Accustomed to wandering, he immediately took to the streets, looking for activities that made sense of his manic energy. He became

a breakdancer and chump-change hustler in the streets, sometimes acting as a skateboarding lookout for graffiti artists, and left home at 16, moving into a series of nasty squats. He reportedly got by on petty theft and odd jobs ranging from the predictable pizza delivery to packing bean sprouts and selling kilts. He made some early hip-hop recordings, releasing a stripped-down single with sampler and drum machine on Morgan Khan's influential Streetsounds label in 1986.

On the heels of icons like Sade and the Style Council, acid jazz moved into the UK clubs concurrent with the resurgence of British soul bands like the Brand New Heavies and Young Disciples. After allegedly fumbling an audition as singer for the Heavies, Kay formed Jamiroquai in 1989 with keyboardist and co-writer Toby Smith, guitarist Simon Katz, drummer Derek McKenzie, and bassist Stuart Zender. Producer Al Stone has also been involved since the early days.

Taking the name from the Native American Iroquois tribe, whose pantheism and earth-awareness he revered, Kay further refined the band's moniker as expressing an identification with Amerindians as an oppressed, displaced people, and chose a logo based on a plains Indian buffalo headdress. At the time, Kay was living in an abandoned taxi depot with no electricity and a dingy sleeping bag. He found support for his righteous anger among the techno-pagan traveler and rave communities that were still dominating the UK music and cultural radar at that time. In print he's often confused Iroquois history with other North American tribes, but those are details he leaves to the critics.

*As "When You Gonna Learn" built steam, Kay began to spew a mix of radical environmental regurgitate and anti-technological sophistry which quickly baffled everyone and continues to do so today. His interviews were wild rambles through space and time. Of course, without direct stylistic impact and a strangely smackin' band to back it up, this business would've just made him another one-hit novelty -though it also didn't hurt to have a clubbing audience famously Eed, coked, drunk and stoned off their tits. "Too Young to Die," the first single from Jamiroquai's debut, *Emergency on Planet Earth*, broke the UK top ten. The album entered the charts at number one and sold half a million copies in the UK alone.*

Return of the Space Cowboy, the band's quick follow-up, was less message-laden and more hip-hop flavored, going platinum in the UK and breaking through Europe and Japan. The title track is reported to be the most-played song ever on London's once-pirate dance radio station KISS-FM, and helped carry that station mainstream. Kay maintained his commitment to angst and white guilt with the track "Manifest Destiny," his reaction to discovering the reality of slavery in the former colonies.

Two years later in '96, Travelling Without Moving's "Virtual Insanity" dealt with the dangers of biogenetic engineering and over-reliance upon technology, warning, "Now there is no sound, for we all live underground." But, overall, the mood was lightening and it continued to do so.

"I said so concisely what I wanted to say on the first album," Kay declares. "I was 17, 18 when I wrote that. Times change and I don't want to hark on about things. Not that they aren't an issue to me. But the music I want to make and the lyrics I want to do conflict with it being played in a club. You start doing, 'The world is coming to pieces,' and people aren't gonna listen to that shit. I'm not a merchant of doom and gloom. I like to fuckin' party big time."

Thus, Travelling was more disco-inflected than ever and devoid of proselytizing outside of "Insanity," which -on the strength of its frenetic, wildly popular video and more than its lyrics- broke the band in America (where they'd previously been disproportionately ignored). The album went platinum and earned the band a 1997 Grammy as well as four US MTV awards -blowing out Beck, Smashing Pumpkins, and almost everyone else hugely popular that year.

"Cosmic Girl" and the similarly bass-popping "Alright" were also top ten hits. Never mind the rambling didgeridoo-in-the-rainforest wankery. Travelling added seven million of Jamiroquai's 11 million worldwide album sales to date.

Since then, even the manure produces roses for Jamiroquai. The 1998 "event" flick Godzilla may have tanked, but Kay's soundtrack contribution, "Deeper Underground," went straight to number one in the UK. And you can take that to the bank.

The fact that Jay Kay took the original \$1.9 million advance from Sony and bought a deep stable of exotic smog-belching sportscars didn't inspire faith in his purported save-the-planet philosophies, nor do much to disapprove accusations of being "young, stuid, and white." It proved only that he didn't give a shit what anyone thought. In very short order he bought a monstrous purple Lamborghini Diablo SE-30 (one of only three in the entire sportscar-mad country of England), a gloss-black Ferrari 355, two other Ferraris, two BMW's, two Mercedes-Benzes, an Aston-Martin (a small nod to patriotism), and a Ducati mini-motorcycle. At Horsenden he also keeps a gold Honda 50 Monkey and a couple mud-caked Mercedes GE 300 sports utility vehicles -just for getting around the farm.

Kay offers no apologies for the cars. He likes speed. His mom tells him that's a generic trait he inherited from his dad. Both at home and in Europe, he's racked up an impressive string of arrests for speeding. He got snagged doing 145mph in the Lamborghini in France.

Perhaps ironically, this trait may put him closer to his black musical counterparts. Like many a hip-hop chart-topper, he finds little contradiction in the messages of his music and the new reality of manor life, good weed, and elite rides. "I drive a fast car," he argues, "and people say, 'You aren't into the enviroment, 'cause you're putting greenhouse gasses into it.' If I never told you I cared, you would have never questioned me about that. Some guy down the road will have twice as many Rolls Royces and they won't say a word to him. Does the same job as me. So what are we saying? He doesn't know about what goes on?"

Still, Kay backs up his conspicuous consumption with some valid rationalization. "I'm into technology being neat and tidy," he says. "Mercedes, they build a fuckin' car and the mean it -90 percent of it is recyclable. And they are bringing out hydrogen-powered cars in five years. This is what Travelling Without Moving was about," he adds, referring to teleportation. Supporting the best technology, he believes, will drive it forward. "You want me to stop driving my car: get me a fuckin' car that does 200 miles per hour and floats."

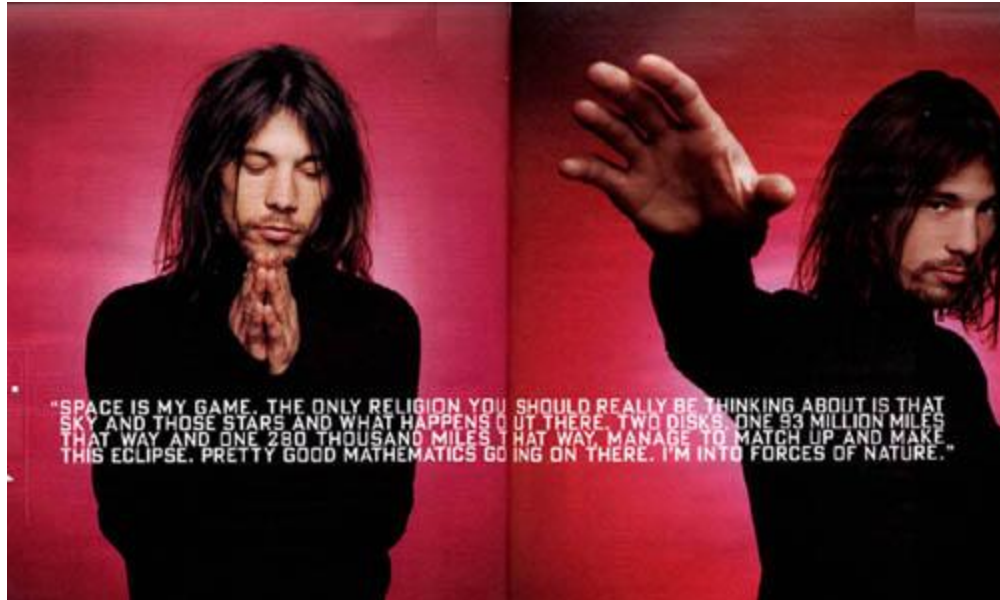
In moments, we are into a rant that goes on for some time, involving the conspiratorial intent behind the Euro, the boondoggle that is England's Millennium Dome and how it could be used for homeless, and, again, mutant children. Then he's off onto synchronicity and his own experience with a form of ESP and religion.

"I could see organized religion as a means of hope," he says. "But you've just got to live in the real world, man. It's just complete and utter indoctrination. Drives people around the bend, causes things like Waco. Causes abuse in children, women. You've only got to look at what goes on in Afghanistan. No music. Choppin' your mother because she's having an affair. Good way of getting your point across.

"I'm fascinated by space," he continues. "Space is my game. The only religion you should really be thinking about is that sky and those stars and what happens out there. Two disks, one 93 million miles that way and one 280 thousand miles that way, manage to match up and make this eclipse. Pretty good mathematics going on there. I'm into forces of nature."

Finally he catches himself.

"I'm not the most coherent person at times," he sighs, "but I see so much bullshit. I do write a bit about in on Synkronized. 'Planet Home' is like that."

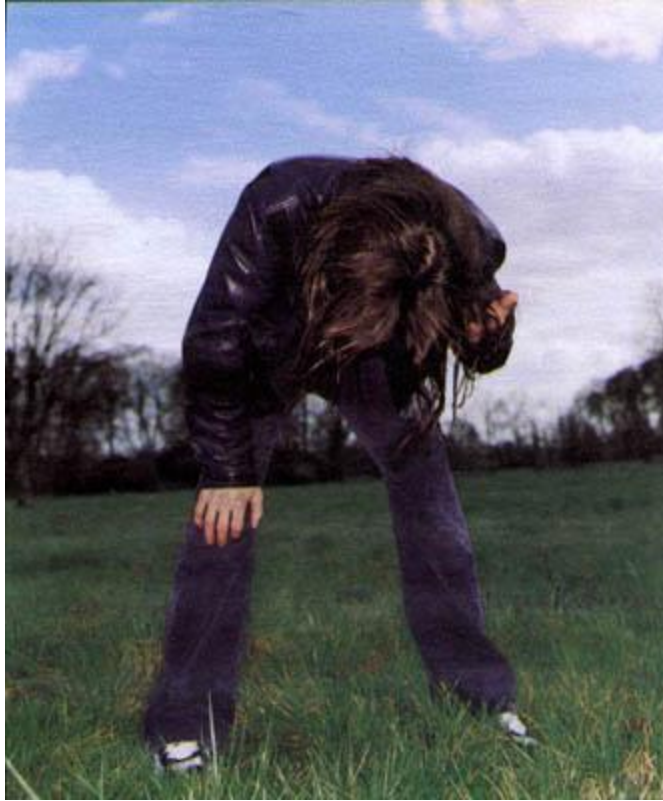


In fact, 'Planet Home' is a good example of how cautionary messages work into Synkronized's pure dance attack. A Heatwave-style groover, the vocals are deep enough in the mix that, in a club, you might not even notice what the tune is about. Even more emblematic is the keyboard odyssey "Destitute Illusions." The track opens with its only lyric, "You may think that you're in heaven..." and then drops into a wacking instrumental. The implication is that Jay Kay is providing a spirited explanation about how this life is not heaven, but rather only destitute illusions. Except that you don't hear it. A B-side version will contain all the original lyrics.

Kay also says it's one of his most personal albums, specifically in the two songs - "King For a Day" and "Black Capricorn Day" - referring to a bitter fight with longtime bassist Stuart Zender, who's now left the band. Nine songs written with Zender were evidently scrapped when he left, leaving the group with only a few months to rewrite and re-record the bulk of the disc.

"I get into savage depressions like Capricorns do," says Kay, explaining the latter tune. "I'm a Capricorn. Deep, dark. Particular with the politics of the band and the trouble that I had with the bass player, who I felt was just unfair to me, really."

"I feel it's best to sort of keep my mouth shut about him," though of course, Jay does nothing of the sort, bringing all the split's sordid (but typical) details to the fore.



The plan now is to take the whole show to America. Kay anticipates a colder shoulder than ever on the home front, especially in the papers. Kay compares his US strategy with that of George Michael, planning to work into playlists on both black and white radio. Success thus far means that he can enjoy this estate, and its studio, where he can come off the road like James Brown and record while the band is hot. But it's also a lifestyle that needs rigorous maintenance.

"People say, 'Oooh, you're alright now, aren't ya?' To be honest, I'm in a worse position," he says. "I used to live in a little house in Paddington. Now I've put my neck on the line because all this has to be paid for. I'm quite happy with this. I've got my place to work. I've got my cars in the garage. Fuckin' I'm happy."

Suddenly he's got me by the arm, leading me out to the window, ready finally to give me the lord's tour.

"This place was a Civil War stronghold by a chap called John Hamden. So you must imagine it looking different. The third floor was added in 1812 and it became more Georgian looking. But the roundheads captured it and then the royalists captured it back. They battered the shit out of this place. It's incredibly steeped in history. King Charles was ment to have been here. This house is mentioned in the Domesday Book. In 1066 the Norman came here; 26 years they've gone past London and up here and set up camp and before that, underneath this, there's Roman ruins. Now you're talkin 900s.... Do you ride a motor bike?"

As it happens, I do. He puts me on the little gold Monkey.

"They only sell these in Japan, you know," he says, kickstarting the engine.

I ride away in the sun, looking back at him smiling after me with his German shepard, Lugar. I spook up running grouse and flying ducks and coots. New bursts of daffodils and crocus bob in the breeze. The roads are rutted by Jay

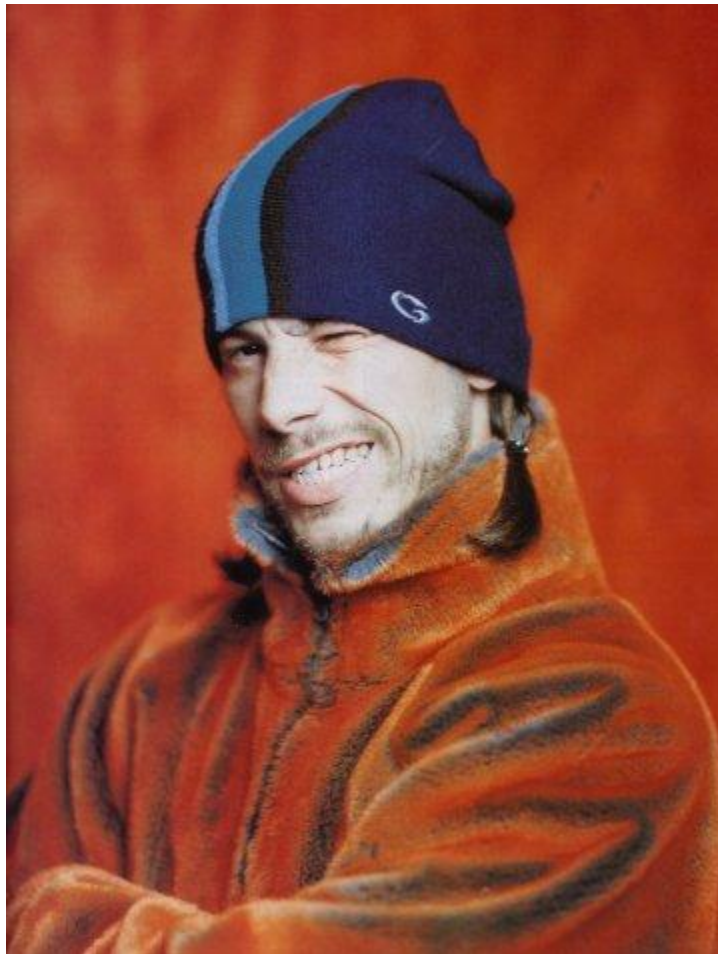
Kay's mad off-road rally racing. Past the Vauxhalle sedan that used to belong to the manager that Kay crashed into a downed tree just for fun, the broken fences he hit with the car, the treeline that was once the main road to London in the 1500s. It's a gorgeous farm on a gorgeous day. And I catch myself thinking that I really, really love disco.

JK Interview #6 | Music Up!

June 1999

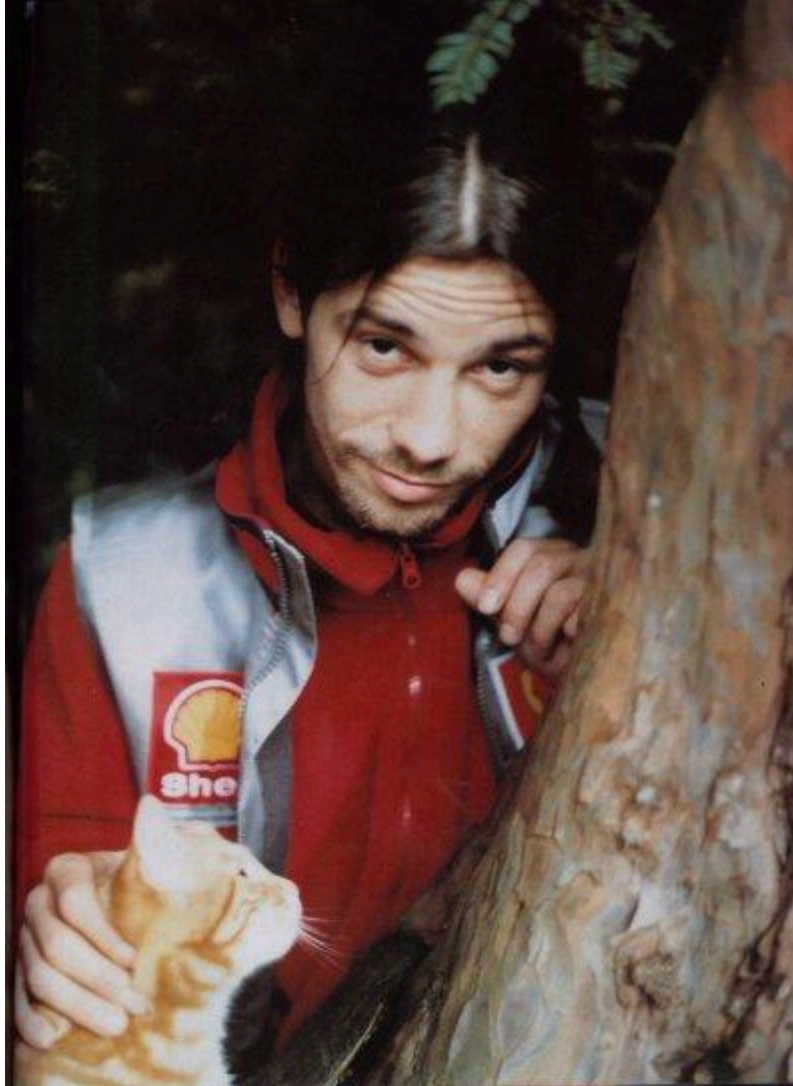
"Jamiroquai: Doctor Jami And Mister Jay"

"A french interview with Jay on then and now who he is."

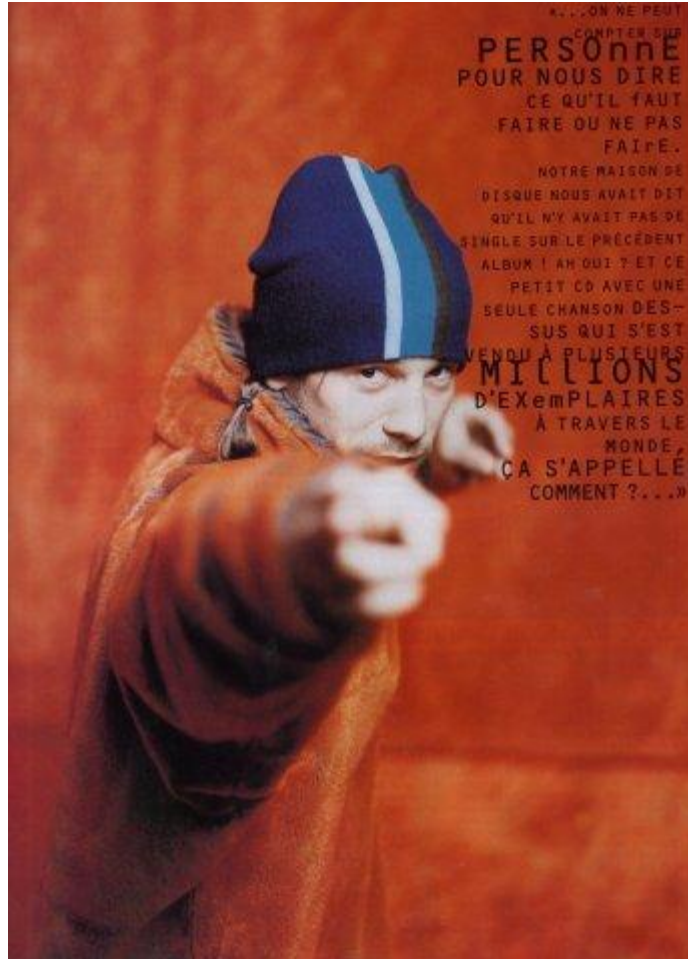


There is one thing that Jay Kay a.k.a Jamiroquai a.k.a the Mad Hatter doesn't like to do : it's providing his album's after-sales service. Meeting journalists, talking about his life and particularly about his artistic work isn't as simple as it could be.

Since the beginning of his career he is on fraught terms with the media. He didn't much appreciate to be accused at a certain time to copy black music, to be called Stevie Wonder's clone and to be regularly mocked for his political stands. His tantrums are legendary like his interview's cancellations at the last moment. A former official of his record company still remembers with pain, journalists coming from the whole world invited with great expense to Tokyo for a couple of interviews and press conferences. They had to go back empty-handed cos the star had decided at the last time not to come.



If Jamiroquai was totally sure that it was really useless he wouldn't make life difficult answering all these questions that he finds stupid or with no interest. He would stay quiet at home right in the middle of the country, in the Northwest of London, having fun with his sportscars (4 Ferraris, 1 Aston Martin, 2 Mercedes, and 1 Lamborghini). But he is doubtful anyway and after 3 years of absence a bit of press can help an album. As he intends well to sell 10 millions of the new one, that is to say 2 more millions than the previous one ("If I don't manage to do it I'll be very disappointed", threats he.) he tolerated the previous month that a few foreign journalists come and pay him a visit. We haven't been invited at his residence but in the studio that he has built for himself, 50 meters far away from this one, between the river which snakes in his property and the empty pool that he is having covering with midnight blue tiled floor. To show that he has maybe said yes to his record company but that it's not going to prevent him from doing what he wants when he wants, just when the interviews are going to start he goes out to give a breath of fresh air to his favourite Aston Martin. He comes back one hour later, settles down yawning behind the studio's mixing desk and has fried eggs brought for himself that he swallows noisily, scratching absent-mindedly balls. Jay Kay likes to claim an education made in the street. He hasn't to worry: he couldn't be taken for a Royal Family's close.



STILL MORE

We're hesitating to ask him if he has crabs so let's start talking naturally about the disco very seventies atmosphere of the first track of the new album: "I love dancing and the seventies were a fantastic time for that", he says. "But this disco atmosphere is only due to strings arrangements, you take them off and it's a normal song. The rest is more in the continuity of what we've always been doing with however a more pronounced incursion into techno with the track Supersonic." Does he listen to techno a lot? "No, only in club. And I'm not going out a lot recently. In any case I'm not the king of guy who buys music, who keeps informed of what is done. Why would I kill myself with that?

I'm making music. I don't need the others' music. When I got going on this album I decided not to listen to music any longer at all cos there are always some guys who are going to come to tell you that you've pinched such and such idea with someone on a given recording. I'm not a techno guy. I'm a guy who has a good time playing live on a stage. I only rely on myself not on the machines. The machines begin always to screw you." The album has been waiting for so long not because Jay was going through some inspiration's crisis but cos the studio wasn't finished and he had decided that it would happened here, at home, or wouldn't at all. "We haven't any longer to kill ourselves with the others, with schedules and reservations' problems. You're at home; you do what you want. I wasn't asking for some incredible technical things, just a good mixing desk that works, a good acoustics, the basic things. The high technology, it's good for those who can't play and who want to make up with a sound. You never make up anything.



You play good music or not. The rest it's no great shakes!" Nevertheless that Jay and his group don't go back in studio as relaxed as in the past. Whatever he takes attitudes of rebel who tells to the whole world to piss off, the sales of his albums impress him and refusing to admit it he is taken in the big spiral of show-business whose motto is "still more". "Bloody hell, 8 millions copies that's a lot. As a result if I don't sell 10 millions copies this time I'm gonna live that as a failure. We worked non-stop during 9 years to reach where we are today; no way I let up. I know that Springsteen thinks that each album has its potential audience and that you can sell 20 millions of one and only 1 of the next one without it means something but he has reached a stage where he is not really passed under review(/undermined) any more. Me, I'm passed under review at each step. And we are on our own. We can't rely on anybody for telling us what we have to do or not. Our record company told us that there was no single on the last album! Really? And this small CD with only one song on it, that sold several millions copies throughout the world, how is it called?

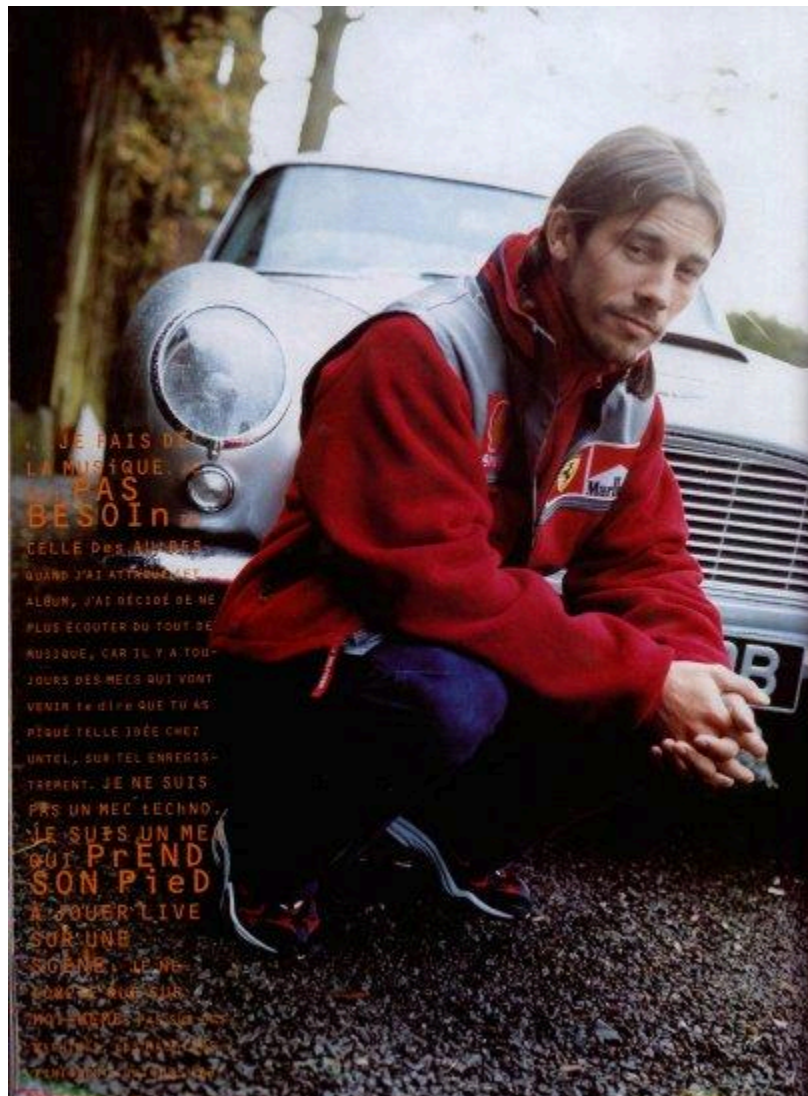
PETTY CRIME

Jason Kay was born in Manchester on 30th December 1969. He had a twin brother but he died 6 weeks after of a brain tumour. His mother is a jazz singer and appears in cabarets throughout the world accompanied (more often than not) by her son. The father wriggled out of it before the birth and Jay never met him: "A few years ago I wanted to hire a private eye to meet him again...and find out a poor bloke who drives around in a Fiat 500. Finally I didn't do it. I have other priorities." So Jay spent a part of his childhood in dressing rooms more or less comfortable throughout the world, waiting for his mum to finish her song recital. "I discovered very early the Great Standards. It did me a lot of good. That's my classical basis." Classical also for a boy raised by a mother was his descent into petty crime. "When I

was a child, left to myself, I learned very quickly that the world was dangerous, that people attacked you, that you had to defend yourself continually. I did all the stupid things you can dream up. I didn't always associate with the elite. I tried out a lot of drugs; I took loads of ecstasy. I've achieved to get out of all that thanks to music. To do the work that I'm doing each evening before several thousand people I have to be totally in self-control. That's why I gave up drugs."

When, at the start of the nineties, he decided to become a singer he had no musical technical knowledge. He was humming the tunes that occurred to him to a friend who retranscribed them. Signed on a small label Acid Jazz, success came very fast. You've got to admit that at a time where the acid jazz term combined an impressive band of incompetents and second-raters, Jay with his bounding soul tunes and his out-of-step swing seemed like the saviour.

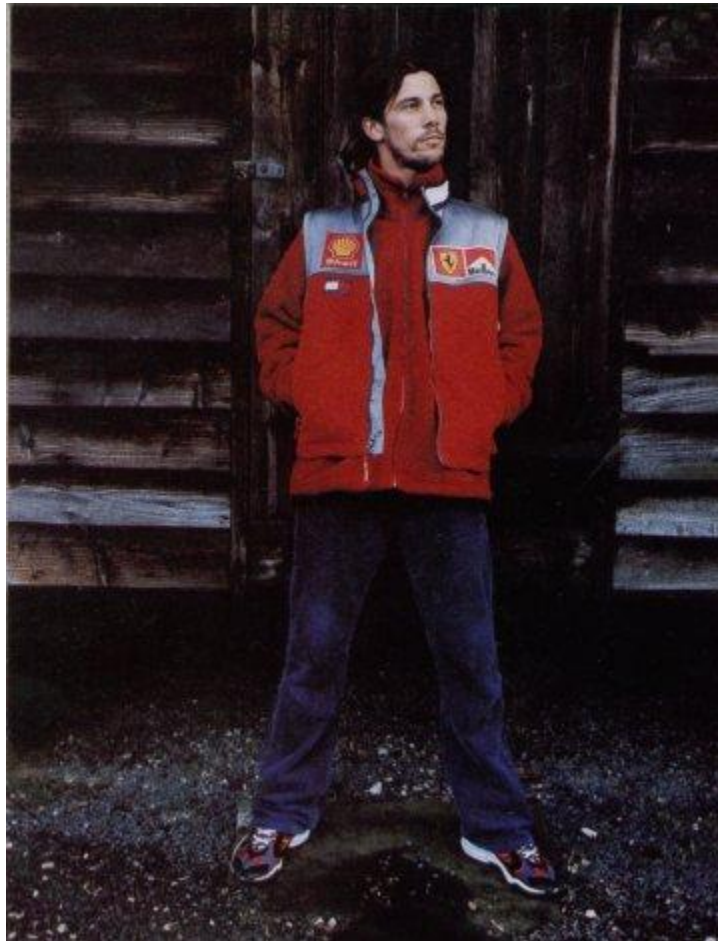
Sony smelled quickly the good deal, took over Jay Kay's agreement and signed him for 8 albums with a 1 millions francs advance. Seven years and 3 albums later Jay Kay is the brit artist very own (home-made) who sells the most records after George Michael.



PARANOIA

And yet success has neither reassured nor calmed him. This young millionaire lives ever in paranoia (press hates him, his neighbours are jealous of him, the other musicians laugh at him, his dog has a pee deliberately on his Ferrari) and

never lowers his guard. Each question is received as an attack and we can tell he is always vacillating between defensive and irritation. "When I started out", he eventually conceded, "I've often been compared with Stevie Wonder. It wasn't hurtful, on the contrary, but when the success reached a large scale all those stupid bastards of music critics accused me of copying black music. It was completely ridiculous but it did harm to me and it was totally unfair. Stevie Wonder has influenced me, I don't try to hide it, but I never copied him. Instead of setting about me, you should be interested in all these brit-pop groups who are just pathetic Beatles' copies. But everybody think it's normal." Jamiroquai lives on the fringes of the music-business for which he nurses an undisguised contempt and when he is not on tour he doesn't leave his property much. When he goes to London, it's more to take one of his cars to the garage than to go to a premiere. "I don't associate with the other groups and musicians. I don't want to be pally with the "stars" of pop music, they are stupid bastards. I have a bloody going in the parties where everybody congratulates one another in general self-satisfaction. The only interesting things that I heard over the last years are Daft Punk and Air. This new French scene is really better than the British one." And above all don't mention hip-hop or rap with him cos he begins really to get worked up. "The hip hop movement is a massive rip-off above all in the USA. All what these stupid bastards are capable of doing, it's stealing the others' songs. They can't fucking compose their own stuffs, they can't fucking sing, they are unable to create so they rap and sample. Big deal. The hip-hop-rap scene is made up of arseholes."



HEADGEAR

Since his debut Jamiroquai built up also a picture of virulent environmentalist, defending together the

Native Americans, Amazon's forests and Greenpeace. "I'm not involved politically with anybody but I have an opinion and I express it. I'm not here to awake the political consciousness of the world but to make it dance. Now I've got a right to have an opinion on the things and if it is passed on owing to my fame it's not my fault. The world is going very badly and I think it's aberrant nothing to do, nothing to say. The British government has just spent millions of quid to have a dome built to celebrate the two past millenniums. Millions wasted to celebrate 2 thousand years of war and destruction." Follows a long diatribe rather confused about the Nato's air raids on Yugoslavia, the people of no fixed abode, the ozone layer, the wars of religion, arms industry and battered animals. The uproar eventually dies down when the press attaché sticks his head out of the door to remind us there are just 5 minutes left. We have just time to ask him - totally aware to plunge back into trivial and pathetic after this highly politicized speech - after his hats and if he intends to continue to appear wearing these stupid headgear as varied as large: "It's my picture and I'm not going to change it. I'm just gonna change my hats. There are so many artists who come, try to draw attention to them and disappear that you have to find a knack to be different. I knew that hats would draw attention. Maybe I wasn't very sure of myself and I was looking for something behind what to hide. The hat gives me anonymity. When I take it off nobody recognizes me and hassles me. When I have my hat I'm Jamiroquai, when I don't have it I become Jay Kay again."

JK Interview #7 | XL Magazine

June 1999

"Jamiroquai Interview" By Vincent Lignier

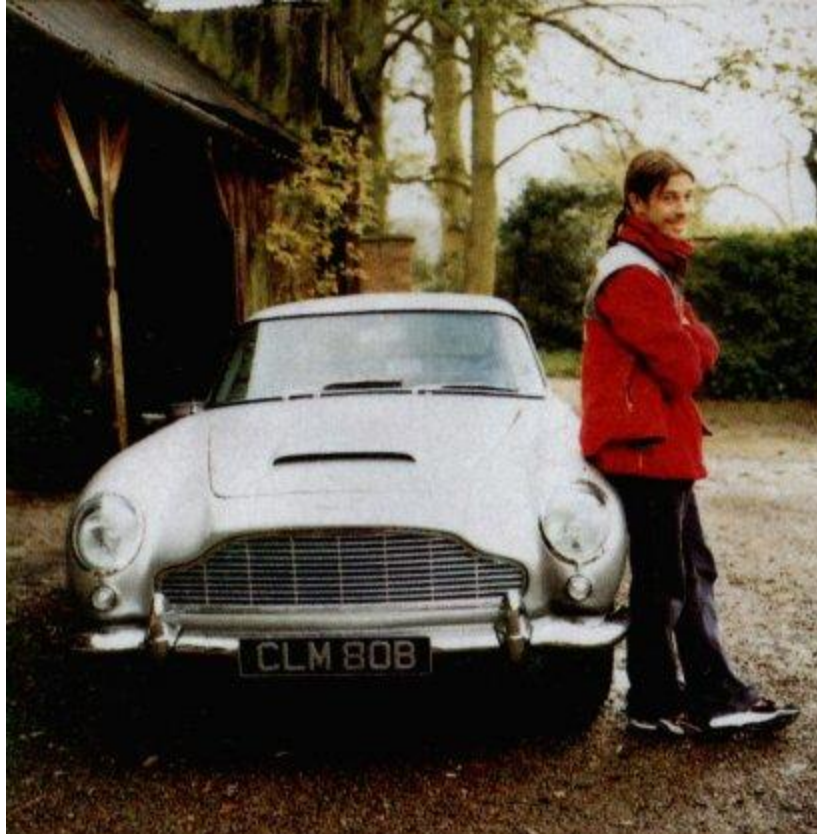
"Jay does Q&A; on the life and children"

He's dancing so you follow him.

Living in his manor in London suburbs, with his studio, his dog, his hens and rabbits, but also his friends and his cars, Jason Kay, the Jamiroquai in-chief, is in his element. He welcomed us without hat, just to show that despite appearances in the contrary, it works under here.

What memory do you have of school?

-I hated school. It was horrible and I'd like to go back to there in order to hit all my teachers. School, it was some wank ! I was a dunce, too busy making a fucking mess, chatting up girls. But I was a favourite. My mother wanted even to send me in a boys' school but I told her "no way !". Actually, she wasn't very cool. She threw me out of the house asking me to find a job. She was broke and I had no father. Actually, I didn't have a very happy childhood...

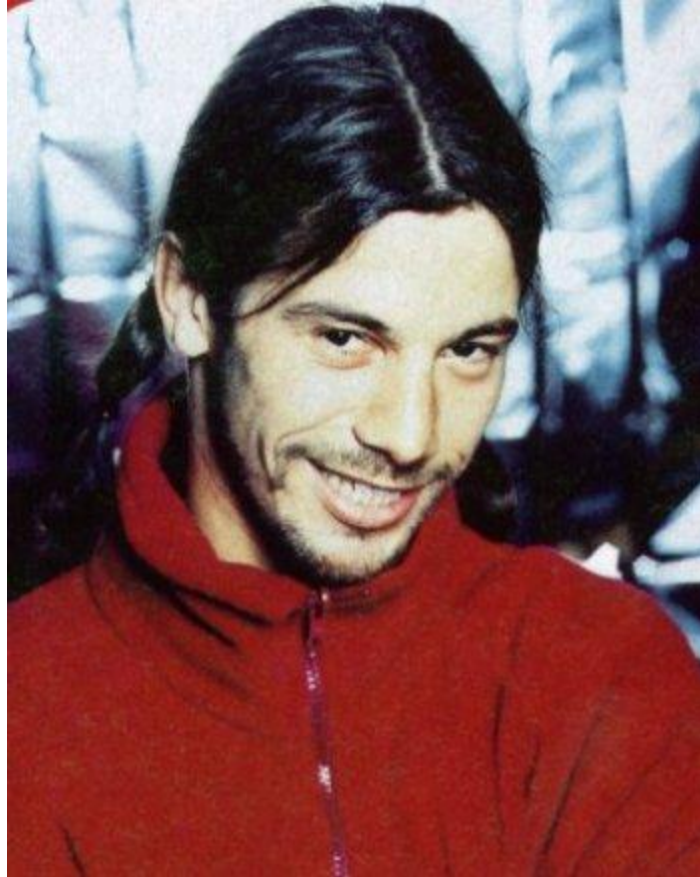


But at least she let you play as you wanted?

-No, I had no money to buy some records, and besides, I didn't even have got a hi-fi system. Anyway, when I could have buy one, I was more thinking about sleeping with girls and skateboarding.

Of what did you dream when you were a teenager?

- I dreamt I was on stage. Like when you have a feeling that your body split in two...Then, I found myself on stage. Even when I was 5 or 6. Actually, life choose your destiny and you follow it.



So you have fulfilled your dream?

- Yes, to realize that it was the Hell. The music business it's also crap. So many interviews, a lot of whom are crap. But apparently it's a necessary evil / bad thing. Today my dream, it's just to make music, have a nice family, live here in the country, sit under a tree with mates, eat olives, drink wine, have a lot of pets and take care of my family. That's my dream.

This new album isn't much about pollution, nature respect. It doesn't interest you anymore?

-Yes, of course but I've my life to live. It's not my fault if people are bloody stupid and don't understand what is happening. Virtual Insanity was talking about genetics manipulations...One day after the release of the single, the headlines in the newspapers read on Dolly the cloned ewe...I'm afraid that the scientists start cloning human beings on the sly or that they crossbreed humans with gorillas in order to turn them in supermans... Soon, there will be no more natural food, all will be genetically modified.



Collect racing cars and talk about the respect of the environment, it doesn't fit much. Is it for that that you stop militating?

-People are saying that "the third album is about Ferraris whereas the first is about "ecological consciousness", but it doesn't work like that. For them it's black or white. They don't see my garden, they don't know that we are using no pesticides, that we are recycling waste in my estate. I'm fed up with having to make excuses all the time on this subject. Of course I'm affected by all this, but I'm also here to make music, so that people dance and have fun, I'm not going to tell them that the end of the world is coming.



Otherwise are you interested in new technologies, in Internet?

- No...I find that terribly boring. It's just for porn freaks. Internet, it's sex, sex and sex again. Do you want me to tell you ? Children aren't going to read books, all the kids are doing today it's sitting at their computer or at their Playstation. Parents love that because meanwhile they have some peace ! My children will be 18 that they wouldn't even know what a Playstation is.

This album is called Synkronised. What do you mean by that?

- "Synkronised" it's to be in keeping with oneself . If you do what your heart tells you to do you are "synkronised". All I've done this over the last ten years I've done it following my own inclination. That's also what I said in "Soul Education". We have all a natural education, a soul education, this sixth sense which "synchronises" you with your environment. Anyway here, in my manor, I can see nature at work, unfold the seasons. There is spring, buds, summer, then it dies and it lives again. Nature is very "synchronised".



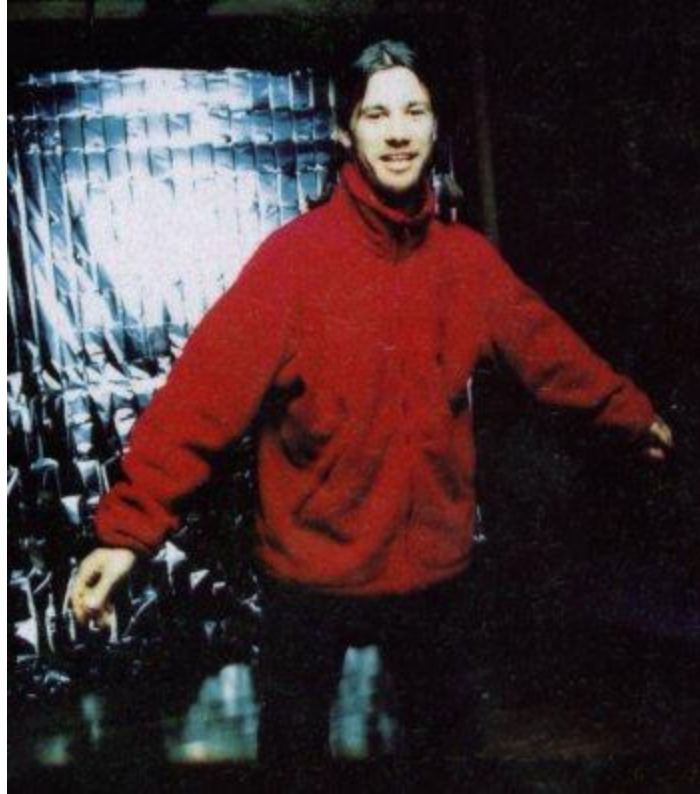
What is the last thing that appalled you?

- I've heard an unbelievable story about a family who lived in London in a small flat. They had a dog which they have tied to a footboard and which has never left this room in 6 years. They didn't feed him hardly ever, gave him rarely a drink...They got 3 weeks in the nick! Me, I would have send them in it for 6 years! I'd have put their photo in the headlines of the newspapers, published their address because if I knew where they live I'll go setting fire to their house. The law is useless. It's really shocking. Who are those old farts who make dispense justice ? Why don't they forbid zoos and circus?



I'm not talking you about bullfight?

- The Spanish are the worst with the animals. I don't want to go in Spain any more because of that : bullfight disgusts me. If they want to fight against a bull they just haven't to stuck him lances in the back. There is nothing brave in it. Animals suffer and people do as if they don't know it. Fuck, of course they do. This people have no soul, they'll go to Hell.



On "Canned Heat" you say "Just Dance". Do you believe that if people were dancing a little more the world would be better?

- We can say that dancing enables to empty his aggressiveness. "Canned Heat" is an "anger" song. If people were dancing more I think that they would be a bit better.

And when you are angry, do you go dancing you too?

- Yes (laughs), but the lyrics mustn't be taken to the letter.

Do you believe that the groove can gather people?

- Oh yes! Where finding people having fun all together better than on a dance floor? Listening to some acid it's fantastic but what gather more people than the disco ?



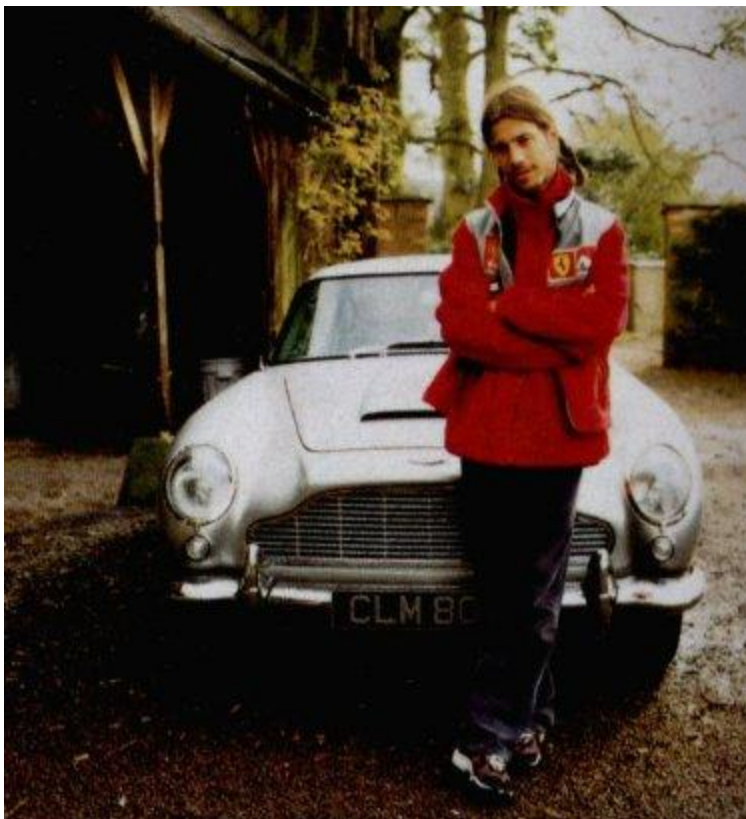
With "Supersonic" you venture on the techno side. Did you ever want to change style?

- the truth is that we're doing this music because we can do it. You'll never see me singing in an indie rock group. They do that and we do something else.



Rap interest you not yet?

- I like Busta Rhymes and they love what we're doing. If I had to choose somebody to do something on "Supersonic" it would be him. In 5 or 10 years people will be fed with some sounds and a lot of them will sample our music.



And what about house?

- I like all the types of music if it's good. I don't like things that are just some spin - off. Personally I think that there is a lot of "daubes" (it's the french word I can't translate it. In english I think it would be "rubbish") There is speed garage, house, "progressive" trance...For a lot of things I wonder how they can listen to it without being high...



How would you describe this new album?

- Better than the previous one. I think this is the best album we've done.

***JK Interview #8 | The Big Issue
June 14th 1999***

***"Jamiroquai" By Precious Williams
"JK, Toby, and Derrick at the mansion"***



JAY KAY, the phenomenally agile 29-year-old front man of funk outfit Jamiroquai leaps to his feet and screams: 'Fifteen million! She's saying I'm worth fifteen fucking million quid, Toby! Where's the fucking fifteen million?'

The pigtailed singer and songwriter raises his thin shoulders in an exaggerated shrug and continues: "There's no way in the world I've got fifteen million. You can't believe everything you read, sweetheart. And whatever money I had, I spent most of it on a house and a studio. There's very little left in the kitty. If someone can LOCATE the missing fifteen million pounds, I'd be most grateful..."

"Oh actually I took it Jay," interjects Toby Smith, the band's keyboardist. "I embezzled it." Smith turns to address lead singer Kay with a mocking smile. "Sorry mate, didn't think to tell you I'd got it."

Kay returns to his seat with a satisfied smirk and grins impishly as the rest of the band dissolve into fits of sarcastic laughter. "I've bought a nice big house, and I've got a few decent cars, yeah," he says conspiratorially. "But it's not like I've exactly bought a lot of cars lately," he adds, eyeing his Jamiroquai colleagues, who collectively nod their agreement. "Is it?"

Kay suddenly lunges forward and snatches up a copy of the group's forthcoming fourth album 'Synkronized' from amid the half-eaten food and smoked-down-to-the-roach joints that litter the room's dining table. "Why is that not done in fucking Jamiroquai writing?" he demands.

"Er that's not the finished thing," explains Derrick McKenzie, Jamiroquai's drummer.

"It doesn't matter," continues Kay. "It should still be in there. It doesn't look the same if it ain't like that. You've gotta stick to the standards."

Kay, in fact, owns a whole fleet of 'decent' cars. At the last count he had two Ferraris, three BMWs, an Aston Martin, a Lamborghini and a Mercedes, collectively valued at £1.5 million. He explains that his obsession with fast cars stems from a childhood spent on the move with his cabaret singer single mother Karen Kay. "When you spent half your childhood bouncing about in the back of a convertible Triumph Herald you learn to appreciate cars like Ferraris and

Aston Martins. I admit I get a total buzz from putting my foot right down. I'm a speed freak, but the cars are NOT status symbols. I know how to appreciate them."

Kay's appreciation of his favourite Ferrari led him to ignore speed limits and hurtle along at an adrenalin-raising 110 miles per hour. His subsequent temporary loss of his license seems to have served only to fuel his arrogance. He derides current British speed restrictions and suggests that driving any slower than 70 mph is 'a joke'. Despite his attitude, Kay has since regained his driving licence and today houses his prized car collection within the confines of his 400-year-old Buckinghamshire manor house.

"If you can afford to buy a house, you buy one, don't ya. I didn't buy the house to make a rock'n'roll statement," Kay says of his £2 million, 42-acre abode which boasts heated outdoor pool, stables and a vast moat. "I wanted to have a place to park my cars and just to, like, be. And I needed a big house so I could build a studio," he continues. "We're the sort of band who need a studio to operate in so that we can become more prolific."

Kay's character is a curious mix of laid-back nonchalance and an intense need to take control. He openly admits to a fatherless childhood and adolescent years spent dealing cannabis and "robbing and stealing" in order to finance the purchase of recording equipment, yet becomes intensely angry when questioned about his controversial pro-weed-smoking stance.

"I'm not fucking controversial," he snarls angrily. "This is fucking ridiculous. What is controversial about talking openly about the fact that people smoke cannabis for fuck's sake? It's the people who oppose smoking spliffs and then go out and abuse alcohol who are fucking controversial!"

Despite the scorching heat of the sunlit afternoon, the star has chosen to swathe himself in knitted headgear, battered jeans, a nylon zip-up jacket and old skool trainers. The Observer recently listed Kay as the ninth richest Brit. under-30. He drives flash cars, dates an in-your-face blonde and lives in a mansion complete with swimming pool and yet singer and songwriter Kay maintains the grungy, street-cool image of a teenage skate boarder.

Kay's girlfriend, former Big Breakfast presenter Denise Van Outen has just launched a range of bikinis to coincide with the release of her boyfriend's fourth album. "It makes life easier going out with someone who's got their own life and is as well known as you are," Kay says of the pin-up who is as famous for her busty blonde image as he is for his trademark hats.

Impatient and easily agitated, Kay tends to respond to questions by hopping from his chair and onto the window-ledge of his ultramodern hotel room. Sometimes he pauses to gaze through the window to take in the panoramic view of London it provides. Most often, he raises up his thin arms and exclaims: 'Can you hear what she's ASKING ME guys?' before darting back to his seat. Questions frequently have to be repeated because Kay has become so engrossed in performing to the rest of the band.

"...Believe it or not, I'm a lot calmer now than I used to be," he adds, slapping the CD back onto the table resignedly. "The new house has got a gate. So now people can't just bowl in like they did in London where everybody came and partied while we were recording the last album."

The album to which Kay refers - 'Travelling Without Moving' - sold 7 million copies following its 1996 release and its upbeat, light-hearted tone represented a major shift away from debut album 'Emergency On Planet Earth.' Jamiroquai burst onto the scene in 1993 as champions of 'green' politics and won over fans in a whirlwind of politically correct environmentalist angst. The band took their name from the Iroquois, a tribe of socially persecuted native Americans.

The second album, 1994's 'The Return of the Space Cowboy' continued the trend for consciousness with 'Manifest Destiny', a particularly sensitive and moving track that charts the unburdening of white guilt over 400 years of black

enslavement in its lyrics. 'Synkronized' - which is to be followed by a series of live dates - is a funky, disco-inspired affair. It's tracks echo the raw, upbeat Seventies output of Earth Wind and Fire and Sly Stone.

Kay hopes that with the release of their fourth album, the band will be taken more seriously than ever and that critics will concentrate on the music rather than on the front man's famously outspoken comments. Political themes and messages are noticeable in their absence from the new album and it seems Kay has decided to quell the hype and focus on the music.

"I'm still into environmental issues and all the rest of it but I also make music" says Kay succinctly. "People have to understand that I'm not prepared to give all of my time bigging up social issues and then getting knocked for it. I've come to a point where I've said a lot of what I wanted to say. I've voiced my views and opinions; and that's all they are; they're my opinions. I'm not a political spokesman and sometimes I just want to write music that's about enjoying yourself."

Kay springs up from his seat to pose for the camera and arranges his frail frame against the monochrome backdrop. "Sometimes you know, I do wonder what the hell I'm doing and want to ask why can't I just have an ordinary life," he says unexpectedly. "Like when it's pissing it down with rain outside and I'm hung over and I look and feel ROUGH. Instead of being able to slump out in front of the TV like my mates, I've got to be ON the TV - in front of ten million people."

Ever since the release of their first single 'When You Gonna Learn?' in 1993, Kay's personal style and readily-voiced opinions have commanded at least as many column inches as the band's genre-expanding music. Kay, a scrawny white Londoner with a distinctive falsetto that has been likened to that of Stevie Wonder, was instantly accused of 'stealing the soul'. Today the diminutive star says that it often scares him to think that other people form their opinions of him from misleading media articles.

"If I had my way, I'd change a whole lot of things, and you can write all this in your article! A lot of things are wrong with this fucked-up world and we can improve this planet no end." rants Kay, his narrow face radiant with enthusiasm. "I wouldn't have spent £750 million on a DOME for a start. I would've spent that money on something useful. Like housing. There's people laying in the streets, for fuck's sake."

While constantly referring to the band as a family, Jamiroquai it seems, is all about Jay Kay. It's Kay who wears the hat, Kay who drives the flash cars and Kay who pays the other band members their wages. While Kay is signed to the Sony label as a solo artist - his band colleagues Toby, Derick and Wallis Buchanan (the band's didgeridoo player) are unsigned and their wages and advances are deducted from Kay's own money.

New album 'Synkronised' in fact, had to be re-recorded from scratch last year after Jamiroquai's former bass player Stuart Zender hastily departed the band. Kay's expression changes to one of mischievous delight when Zender's name is mentioned. He leaps out of his chair once again and shouts to the rest of the band: "She's asked me a question about Zender!". He laughs loudly and mockingly, pauses for dramatic effect and then proceeds to give his version of events.

"The album track 'King For A Day' is basically written about him, because that's what he was - before I kicked him out! He betrayed us basically. He decided to quit the band and then went around telling tabloid papers that he left because I was greedy.

"From childhood, I've always known that you have to look out for yourself or people will shit on you," adds Kay thoughtfully. "And when someone jeopardises my plans - I go into total overdrive."

JK Interview #9 | MTV
June 10th 1999
"Jamiroquai Interview" By John Norris
"JK on Synkronized and hitting the US"



A source of simmering retro-techno grooves, global-politik lyrics, and jazz-worldbeat fusion since 1992, Jamiroquai broke through in the U.S. in 1997 with its Grammy Award-winning "Virtual Insanity," thanks to the confounding appeal of the song's video (directed by Jonathan Glazer). A boatload of MTV Video Music Awards later and the band was finally seeing its Stateside sales soar with its third album, "Travelling Without Moving," and frontman Jay Kay suddenly became the poster boy for video innovation.

Kay ducked out of sight and turned his attention to recording Jamiroquai's fourth LP, "Synkronized," which finds the band in a somewhat darker-hued (yet still extra-funky) mood. For the first single, "Canned Heat," the band tapped director-of-the-moment Jonas Akerlund, who's helmed Madonna's "Ray of Light," Metallica's "Whiskey in a Jar" and "Turn the Page," and Prodigy's "Smack My Bitch Up," among others. The result is a one dizzying boogie trip indeed, even though Kay wound up sacrificing a few drops of the red stuff during the shoot.

MTV News' John Norris chatted up the be-hatted dance machine about recording "Synkronized," breaking America, the grueling "Canned Heat" shoot, and the truth about whether or not Kay's "boogie is for real."

"The next video is going to be on a bloody beach!" Kay warned. Not literally, we hope...

John Norris: So what's new since the last album?

Jay Kay: *I've bought a house outside of London, out in Buckinghamshire. I've found my little spiritual home, and I'm really happy. You have to remember, I've lived out of a bag for ten years, nearly. And to find a place at last... It's a very peaceful place, you know, a lake and a waterfall and stuff.*



You've got [a] one in a million chance of finding the kind of place that I kind of live in, and [to] have a separate studio, a separate building for a studio is unheard of. I've built a 48-track studio [there]. It's called Chillington, appropriately, because we spend most of the day like that, chilling.

JN: How did that affect the recording of "Synkronized?"

JK: *We got this album together in six months. We had a load of tracks... nine tracks, and I wasn't happy with it. It just started sounding like the old stuff. And it was just like, there has to be a movement up.*

[The last album was] quite a difficult act to follow. You start trying to do what you did last time, so it's no good. So [now] there's a progression there, and it's nice.

I'm back in the game. I think it's a better album than the last one. Better production, because we built the studio at home.



JN: Did the departure of Stuart [bassist Stuart Zender] affect you any?

JK: *I guess that he wants to do his own thing, really. We're all happy for him to go and do that. And we look forward to hearing it. The story of him getting paid is, uh, not true. Toby [Smith] and me do the writing in the band, and Stuart's writing input was minimal, and I think he still got paid a huge amount for what he did.*

JN: You don't think he was undercompensated?

JK: *When you go and spend a hundred grand on a new Mercedes, you ain't underpaid.*

JN: The first single off the new album is "Canned Heat." What's that about?

JK: *"Canned Heat" is the anger. It doesn't sound like an angry song, but it's quite an angry song for me. It's been quite a tough couple of years. I let myself go.*

JN: *And for the video, you hooked up with Jonas Akerlund.*

JK: *He worked me into the ground. I wrote on the back of the album, "Thanks, Jonas, I can no longer walk." Everyone goes to me, "Hey, that was computer-generated." No it wasn't!*

The trouble is, you win "Video of the Year," people expect something funky. So this time, we've got the world's largest revolving room. It's the most odd, confusing scenario for your head.

So if you see the room going this way [demonstrates], and then you step on to this wall, and already it's there. And then you climb up here, and suddenly it's gone down to there, and then suddenly it's gone down to the bottom. And of course all the furniture's stuck, so your mind actually can't take it -- the fact that you're looking at all the chairs and all this up there on the wall. It's dead confusing.

Everybody was like, "He's going to get hurt." And I did get hurt. I cut my head open on the last shot. The things I do for videos. You know when you watch a Jamiroquai video, somebody's been hurt. And it's me.

JN: *Do you feel like there's some confusion in America as to what the group's all about?*

JK: *I think they think I'm a headless donkey on acid over here. I just kind of feel that Jamiroquai trying to penetrate Kansas City and Tennessee is kind of tough. I came back here [to America] eight times in 1997. Eight separate times... I only ever get to do the edges, you know. We only get as far as Denver and we kind of... the bus won't go. Can't get past Denver. [Or] Atlanta. There's all this stretch in the middle... it's just like, "Oh, quick, stop the bus."*

JN: *Is winning over America a big goal for you?*

JK: *My whole aim in making music is to do one, two classic tracks, which people don't forget, which everybody loves. Which I haven't done yet.*

JN: *Really?*

JK: *No, man. I'm just not quite there.*

JK Interview #10 | Sanity Magazine

June 10th 1999

"Sasha Perera Gets In Sync With Jamiroquai's Jay Kay"

By Sasha Perera

"Jay Kay talks about Stu, Nick, and music styles."



It's the return of the Space Cowboy, as the man in the hat 'Jay Kay' and his band of merry men, collectively called Jamiroquai, return to the spotlight with their eagerly awaited fourth album. Synkronized. A disco fuelled, energetic, soul stomping, funk affair that reaffirms the fact that Jamiroquai are then phattest band in the business.

Following on from their debut album Emergency on Planet Earth, the follow up Return of the Space Cowboy, and 1996's seven million selling, Grammy Award winning Travelling Without Moving, Synkronized is an all out funk forced attack that is just as refreshing as when you heard Jamiroquai the first time 'round.

Quite a bit has changed for Jamiroquai since the release of Travelling Without Moving. The band conquered America without losing their unique credibility, they debuted at No. 1 on the UK chart with the low down murky funk of "Deeper Underground" (on the soundtrack to "Godzilla"), they built their own home studio, but the most obvious change for the group was the departure last year of Stuart Zender. It was a personal change the obviously affected the progression of Jamiroquai, and the recording of Synkronized.

"Well it was very difficult," explains Jay Kay, obviously disheartened by the experience. "It was a very bad time to leave people when you've done nine tracks. I think things sort of broke down to the point where it was just very difficult for us to work together. When somebody wants to do their own thing and they're not focussed on what you want to do and they want to pursue their own career, you have to let them go. If you can't work with and get along with them, you're better off lettin' them go. So that was the solution... we were left with nine tracks.

"The [new] studio got started in January [1998], we went in and did those nine tracks upstairs, finished in July, and then by September he'd decided that he didn't want to bother and more so, to save any complications and legalities and what you have that go on, I suggested that we completely rewrite a new album which is what we did.



"I think there was one track we kept from the old stuff that we'd done and that was it, but I'd rather write stuff again to be honest. I always think it's less grief because, you get to the stage of people becoming bitter and saying that they've written it, and all this kind of rubbish goes on, so it's kind of the easy way to get round it, I suppose."

Did Jay Kay feel that the musical style of the album changed as a result of the movement in group dynamics, or did the group just pick up the pieces in their new studio and find their flow again?

"I don't feel you can depart too much from your style because people want to see a certain thing from you, and in a way this album is like a crossroads album for us. It's four albums; it's half way through my deal with Sony and it's a crossroads album. It's the first album we've done in our studio and it takes a bit of time to adjust to that; it takes a bit of time not to treat this studio as a party. We took six weeks to find a new bass player because by the time we got auditions together and assorted bass players came by..."



"He fits really well," says Jay Kay of new bass player Nick Fyfe, who funnily enough, also applied to a Jamiroquai covers band in the same week that he auditioned for the real group! "It's difficult to find someone, they've got to get along with you; they got to like the stuff we do. They've got to know that we've been doing this for 10 years, so it's like we got set in our ways."

As with most of Jamiroquai's albums, the music on offer flirts with soulful; melodies and funky basslines, as well as trying to explore new avenues of style and sound without changing dramatically. The title of the album seems to reflect the group's coming together musically to find a style that is distinctly their own. Synchronised finds a unanimously agreeable sound that all members of the band are completely comfortable with. Jay Kay explains further a little more deeply about the album's title. "I feel that everything in life is synchronised. Everything has a lead, everything's got a universal harmony about it; the trees and the land, and the sea and sky and what have you ...and that also it gets reflected in people. I think if you follow your heart, which is your natural intuition, you can't go wrong. People say to me, "well why, why do you do so well?"

"Well apart from working hard, it's because I follow my heart and do what I think is best to do for me, so therefore I'm sort of...I feel that I'm synchronised.

"I'm in tune with myself and that's what being synchronised is, being in tune with what your heart wants. You go through life and realise life is just a road and it branches out and you have to [choose] the right fork in life.

"I think we have a unique situation in this band where I like to work with the guys all the time. People tend to see me as Jamiroquai but we're all collectively workin' together."

From the disco injected, bass propelled, swirling string infused goodtime funk of the first single "Canned Heat", the dancefloor sound of "Supersonic" and the funk flow of "Planet Home", through to the melodic vibes of "Butterfly", the new album seems to be all about finding comfort and security in letting your hair down. Jay Kay agrees, choosing to explain in relation to the album's first single.

"After having the problems we've had this year, and having to start again I think it gave me a new angle on what I was writing. When I get angry and I get into that kind of mood and I feel the world's against me and I do feel that sometimes a lot of the album reflects that. I feel like I want to get out and I want to express my energy, and I express my anger and my energy through dancing. The more knackered and sweaty I can get, the more I feel like I've really worked it out of my system. Often I will go and do that and as the lyrics suggest, you know, "there's nothing left for me to do but just boogie".

"Like I do with everything we do, I put my heart and soul into this record because otherwise it's not worth doing. I want to make sure of that when we put an album out, and think people have come to expect it. I mean not everybody like's Jamiroquai, I know that, but a lot of people do like our stuff and I want to keep them happy, and I want to make sure they've got some good tunes that they like to roll with. I mean there's a lot more boogie in this album; there's a lot more attention to bass and stuff. I don't like to do an album with filler tracks I'm not into that.

"I mean you find a lot of albums with three great tracks and two of them are the singles that you hear in the chart, and you go and buy the album and the rest of it's just bland and dull. I think there aren't many bands that can do a track like "Supersonic" and a track like "Canned Heat" and a track like "King For A Day". That's where we win because we can do the ballads and we can do the faster stuff, and we can play it live."

JK Interview #11 | Rolling Stone Magazine

May 27th 1999

"Jamiroquai's Boogie Factor" By Richard Johnson

"Jamiroquai's Jay Kay on album four & its purpose."

"Jay Kay, the leader of Jamiroquai, believes that the world runs on vibrations. He claims that the number thirty-six has an otherworldly relevance. And he fully intended for his upcoming fourth album, Synchronised, to address the mystical significance of the millennium. "But everyone else was doing it,"

says Kay, 29. "In the end I felt it would be corny and tacky. So I gave up on all of my ranting. Except in private." Instead, *Synkronized*, an album of electrofunk rock, has a simple message: "All I'm trying to say is, 'Let's boogie.'"

With its synthesized bass notes and hand claps, the album, due out June 8th, has an early-Eighties feel. It flits(sic) from the lushness of Earth Wind and Fire - especially on "Canned Heat" - to the rawness of Sly Stone, on "Butterfly." All with the snare drum sound of George Clinton. "The album uses more computers than our previous work," says Kay, sitting at the mixing console in his home studio outside of London. "The only reason I make music is that I want to boogie to it. And Synkronized gets closer to it than any other album." The album's release was delayed when Jamiroquai bassist Stuart Zender left the band in October. Kay had to dump Zender's tracks to avoid legal complications. There were further delays while Kay applied for planning permission to build this studio, on the grounds of his forty-two-acre estate, in the Buckinghamshire countryside. The manor house - a twenty-minute drive to London in his Ferrari - dates from 1586. "But best of all, it's got a gate," says Kay. "So now people can't just bowl in. In London everybody came and partied while we were recording the last album - no more.

"What influenced the style of the album was the reception I got for 'Deeper Underground'[from the Godzilla: The Album soundtrack]," he continues. "Liam [Howlett] from the Prodigy said how much he liked it. I've tried to be simple with my hooks. Synkronized works on a first listen - which is a bad thing and a good thing. People could get bored of it by listen eight."

Though Kay worked with dozens of musicians, Synkronized is very much his baby. "I think of all the fucking parts," he says emphatically. "And I construct it. All in my head. When the brass guys came to the studio, I was working on this tune. Hummed what I wanted. But they played something different. I said, 'What's that?' They said, 'You can't put a minor next to a major.' I said 'Yeah, but your version sounds like shit. Just play what I'm singing. I can hear it all in my head.' And I was right."

JK Interview #12 | The Express

May 25th 1999

"The Cat Who Got The Cream" By James O'Brien

"Jay Kay talks about the original album four & a zender-like event."

FRESH FROM A BUST UP WITH HIS BASS PLAYER, JAY KAY OF JAMIROQUAI IS THINKING ABOUT FATHERHOOD, LAYING DOWN ROOTS WITH GIRLFRIEND DENISE VAN OUTEN AND DOMINATING THE CHARTS THIS SUMMER WITH HIS NEW ALBUM, SYNKRONIZED

WHAT do you give the man who has everything? If you're talking about a man who's just parked one of his seven super-cars outside the smartest bar in the capital and left Denis Van Outen at the massive mansion they share; and if you're asking a traffic warden charged with plying his poisonous trade on the Bently-strewn streets of Mayfair, then the answers simple. You give him a parking ticket.

The slick intervention of a doorman means that this neat solution to one of life's great mysteries does not reach Jay Kay.

In a lavish suite atop London's Met Bar, the multi-millionaire Jamiroquai frontman is busy tearing things apart: chickens, unsmoked cigars, his former bassist and recent reports of imminent nuptials.

"I'm getting married apparently," he laughs resignedly between open mouthed munches. "These people should get their facts right. Marriage isn't my thing. We've talked about it, we have a laugh about the newspaper stories and we're happy as we are thank you."

"Don't get me wrong. I want what ordinary people want. I'm 30 at the end of this year and I'm ready to set down with someone I love - I've already started actually."

"And I want a family. They've all had one," he grins petulantly, nodding at keyboardist and chief co-writer Toby Smith and drummer Derrick MacKenzie, both recent fathers. "And I want one".

This settling process began when the resolutely urbanite "cat in the hat" quit London for 72 acres rural bliss in the heart of Buckinghamshire.

Even with a fleet of motors and an uberbabe for company, it seemed a strange move for a man whose child like hyperactivity could scarcely be accommodated by a city.

*There has, of course, always been an eco-friendly vibe throbbing in the background of Kay's professional and personal pronouncements since his debut album, *Emergency On Planet Earth*, catapulted him to fame and fortune while cautioning groovily against environment disaster.*

But his smoothly sophisticated music, his clockwork appearances at parties and in gossip columns and his predilection for fortunes fanciest (and fastest) trappings suggested that he belonged in the fast lane.

"I've heard all this talk about losing your edge and I don't get it," he says hopping hyperactively from the table and pacing while he talks. "Mate, nature is really something. It's funk. It's very beautiful and it's inspiring. Lights, colours, plants, birds, animals. Pure beautiful and synchronised."

*SYNCHRONICITY, it soon emerges, is something of a mantra for Mr Kay. The Police beat him to the correctly spelled album title 20 years ago so Jamiroquai's forthcoming album is called *Synkronized* and, according to the singer, its inception, execution and intent of all interplay with the rest of his, low-key life.*

"We've built a studio at the house, which is where we made the album. We did the press shots at the house, the album cover in the garden. Both the album and the house are a crossroads for me. It's like the handcuffs have been taken off and we're free for the first time. That's what I mean by synchronised. That and the fact that Jamiroquai are a family".

It is, for all its rosiness, an endearing philosophy and one which he seems better to demonstrate than articulate

He is, for example, the only one in the band actually signed to the record label, Sony, and thus the only one entitled to lucrative percentage points. He takes the lions share but splits the rest with the band's other members, Smith, Mackenzie, Nick Fife and Wallis Buchanan.

"I don't have to do that," he insists in a surprisingly strident tones. "And I'm telling you how the record company points I gave to the bass player for the last album were worth £300,000."

The bass player, who Kay never mentions by name in the course of the interview, is Stuart Zender. He quit the band last year after his girlfriend, All Saint Melanie Blatt, had their first child and within weeks was publicly lambasting Kay's "greed".

It clearly rankled then and it clearly rankles now and stridency replaced by his real and considerable anger, he gets his teeth into the subject.

"This is what happened. The studio was finished in July last year; we took 10 tracks and had the album almost ready in no time. That's the sort of band we are. Straight in, bang, thank you very much. We're one take wonders."

"Anyway, there is an, erm, altercation with the bass player. He wanted to go off and do his own thing. It was very difficult. I thought it was a bit hard and a bit selfish for him to do that. We are a little family"

All families, of course, have heads and while he can effectively counter all accusations of greed, Kay's composition - his impetuosity, his self assurance, his righteousness and his self-styled success - conspire to create the image of a man who likes, even demands his own way. Perhaps Zender just refused to be bullied.

"It is difficult when someone expresses negative feelings about what you are working on together but makes it very difficult for you to communicate with him", counters Kay, suddenly more thoughtful and keen to get his point across.

"If they want to do their own thing, that's fine, but there's no point trying to do something together because we're all trying to do something constructive and you just want to go out and be a star or whatever."

He is really fuming now. Toby and Derrick, his companions for the day, exchange concerned but unsurprized glances.

"Let me tell you how our songwriting royalties work. We share them out, even though Toby and I do most of the writing, Derrick and the others get a cut. That's how we are. So the album's almost done, the bass player wants to leave and six weeks later he wants to sign the publishing deal. I didn't feel that someone could cause an altercation with me, call me greedy in a national newspaper, bang on about doing his own thing and then stick his hand in the wallet of our forthcoming album."

The British usually like their hippies like the boiled eggs. Soft. Jay Kay's whiskery and pig-tailed appearance, and his environmental enthusiasms, may score highly on the Swampy scale but the next announcement (and the fact that Sony now pay him to use his own Studio) reveals a steel centre.

"So we did a new album," he says, as poker-faced as a man turning over four aces can be. "We got a new bass player and an extra keyboard, put a lot more sound through Toby and did a whole new album. If the bass player wants to do his own thing, he can do it on his own thing." The result is a different sound.

With Smith's programmed rhythms becoming a part of the main music, instead of rumbling, bass like in the background, it has rendered Synkronized a neater, tighter and more immediate album than their previous offerings. It will lend itself to the killer remixes much more than the leisurely, Jazzier Jamiroquai grooves of old.

"It held us up but we produced a better album in the end," considers Kay "More in with the disco thing that was popping up in places on the last one, bigger, more focused."

So that cloud had a silver lining. The other part of Planet Jamiroquai where synchronicity seems absent is his predilection for petrol-guzzling Aston Martins, Ferraris and the rest while banging on with the environment.

HE CONCEDES immediately: "It's a contradiction. I have a passion which contradicts another of my passions. I don't think it's a problem. I have hundreds of speies of trees at my house. I support Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, I have some of the best tended land in the country and I only drive one car at a time.

"If people saw me mashing trees with a chainsaw or dumping toxic waste in my streams they'd have a point. I don't think it's such a glaring contradiction and if I'd kept quiet about the environment instead of trying to do my bit nobody would have been arsed about the cars."

So he's happy, he's dealt with a couple of demons, he's laid down roots and a brilliant album and with the supremely summery Canned Heat released tomorrow, he could be cruising to his second number one.

The Sony contract demands four more albums. ("Oh dear. Wasn't I a silly boy? It was a bit of a milestone") But surely there's time for a bit of a breather; time to get to work on producing Jay (or Denise) junior?

"That's the trouble, mate. I should be pausing for breath now" He grins before theatrically hyperventilating. "But we're off again, you know, and that's the nature of winning the race. The nature of winning the race is to keep running and the race is to make classic tunes and to still be here in 10 years." As if to prove itm he's up like a Jack in the box. Pirouetting in the suite's picture windows, doing falsetto Newsround theme music and headlines ("Massive rock star slams bass player") and from unveiling a few acapella vocals from the new album.

"We've only just started", he cackles. "We're at the bottom of the mountain. We're running a marathon and we're pacing ourselves perfectly."

The cat may be after lots more cream but at least he's happy to share it.

**JK Interview #13 | The Independent
May 22nd 1999**

"In At The Deep End" By Lisa Markwell

"Jay hits the nail on the head by answering about his new life."

There's more to life as a pop star than selling 10 million records. Jay Kay, branded 'the prat in the hat' by critics, has stalkers, Denise Van Outen, and a mighty big mortgage on his mind. At his country mansion he talks revealingly to Lisa Markwell. Photographs by Justin Westover

You're 29 years old. You've just bought your first place, your career's going well (although your job can be a bit stressful). Your car's got a little dent from a prang at the weekend, but your girlfriends great - you think you might have met the right one, at last.

Except, the starter home is an 11-bedroomed Georgian mansion in 72 acres, the job is playing live all around the world and trying to top a multi-million-selling last album, the car's a Ferrari 550 Maranello and the girlfriend is one of the sexiest women in the world, so the picture looks a little different. You're Jay Kay.

On the eve of the release of Jamiroquai's fourth album, Synkronized, the singer sits in his back garden and ponders what a long strange journey it has been. He's the one-hit wonder that wasn't, the "cat in the hat" who very quickly became the prat in the hat, with the annoying voice and the daft dance, and a logic that decreed that environmental concerns and owning seven sports cars weren't mutually exclusive. Since Jay Kay launched himself on the public consciousness in 1993, like a hipper, thinner, even more mouthy forerunner to Robbie Williams, the criticisms have been many and varied. One stands out and is often repeated when Jay Kay is mentioned: he sounds exactly like Stevie Wonder.

Success, as the say, is the best revenge. "I feel like after selling eight million copies of the last album, we've been around long enough to rise above the criticism, really," is Jay's considered response. And besides, "I may be the prat in the hat, that's cool, but I drive an Aston Martin DB5. Prate I may be, but a prat with an incredibly large amount of style." All this said of course, with his trademark sly grin. "I'm in this absolutely gorgeous manor house with acres of quite beautiful countryside. I've got trout in the river, an organic vegetable garden, I've got my work 40 yards from my home. I don't mind being criticised, but where are they criticising from? Which hut are they criticising me from, exactly?"

Well, quite. It's hard to argue when you're a guest at the manor house, watching the two gardeners mow the lawn, the swimming pool being renovated and the cleaner work her way around the sprawling abode. I'd be prepared to put up with some flak for this. Despite the mixed reactions of the music critics, Jamiroquai's particular brand of loose grooves have always found favour with both the dinner party and dancefloor sets. Synkronized takes the band in a disco direction. Radio and remix friendly, loud enough to fill a stadium, it should consolidate Jay's position in the pop firmament and rack up a few more royalty cheques. Jamiroquai, it can confidently be predicted, will have another hit with Synkronized and its distractingly catchy first single, "Canned Heat". (Typical lyric: "All the nasty things that people say, well I'm gonna make it anyway.")

It is, I point out, the first album to which normal people, people who don't bend and twitch alarmingly like Jay, can dance (although the first video has all the familiar tics in spades). Jay, whipper thin, wispy bearded and handsome in what his girlfriend accurately calls a dirty-looking way, sniggers. He knows the demarcation line between black and white music has blurred since he was first criticised for ripping off R&B; and soul. "It's ironic how it's gone full circle - I'm the white guy doing black music and all of a sudden we've got black guys sampling white guys. We've had five or six requests to use our tracks to rap over." That, and the small matter of Stevie Wonder himself congratulating Jay Kay on his music. "After years of people saying 'Oh you're just copying this guy', the guy himself actually appreciates what you're doing - cool I was nearly in tears."

And the last time he was nearly in tears was when he was "betrayed" by former bass player Stuart Zender, whose desire to "do his own thing" led to his departure from Jamiroquai at an inconvenient time. "We'd written an entire album," remembers Jay, "and then we had to say bye-bye to Stuart." Loud, cheeky and primarily interested in the faster things in life he may be, but Jay knows his way round a contract. "I decided for the sake of any legal bullshit that we would rewrite the entire album again - from scratch."

This unexpected development has had two important effects. Zender counted himself out of a great deal of money (for although Kay is the only one signed with a lucrative eight-album deal to Sony, he shares royalties with his musicians). Second the resulting rewrite has made for a tighter, more angry collection of songs (apart, that is, from two deeply tracks written undoubtedly for Jay's beloved Denise Van Outen). At the risk of incurring Jay's wrath, it's fair to say that if you like Earth Wind and Fire, Donald Byrd, Sly Stone and, yes, Stevie Wonder, you'll love Synkronized. "Where?"

Where am I a plagiarist?" he hollers indignantly. "There's not one thing on that album that we've taken, we don't do that. For the whole recording period, I don't listen to one outside influence..."

The album was recorded at Jay's new studio conveniently placed between the house and the pool, and the band - Toby Smith, Derrick Mackenzie, Simon Katz, Nick Fife and Wallace Buchanan - are in the converted outhouse rehearsing for a tour. Jay yells encouragement from his bench by the lake, where he's tucking into bacon sandwiches, prepared by the housekeeper. His good-natured tirade continues.

"When I listen to Radio 1 and hear five different tracks in a row using old disco samples, well that's plagiarism, that's taking other peoples music." Jay intends to ask Liam Howlett of The Prodigy to remix one "disco, fucking, pounding dance" track.

*You won't be hearing the naive, if affecting polemic against environmental destruction that made his first album *Emergency On Planet Earth* so newsworthy. He's more circumspect about singing these days. "After a while you realise that people won't boogie and dance to those tunes." However, the millennium is preying on his mind and he's off again.*

"No one has bothered to read Nostrodamus's prediction that the world will end in 1999, and that it will start in Yugoslavia. Everyone seems to have forgotten that and the fact he got the other two antichrists right. All he has to do is get the third..." His voice trails off. As he surveys the rambling garden, concerns about the environment are not far from his mind. "The other night, I had a meal that all came from here; rainbow trout, new potatoes, green beans, runner beans. Lovely." He'll be all right if the shops run out of food.

*Jay Kay is now a bona fide "celebrity". Not because he's sold 10 million albums and conquered America. Not because *Synkronized* will earn him more fans and more millions. No, Jay is a star because he's got three touchstones of modern celebrity: a stalker, a kiss-and-tell and a famous girlfriend. Nearly 10 years into a career that's seen him win both Grammys and that unshakeable epithet "the prat in the hat", Jay Kay makes regular appearances in the "red top" newspapers. "I read the other day that I was supposed to have been in a lap-dancing club, I ask you ... I've never been near one, I can never understand the point of looking at something you can't touch. Anyway, with Denise Van Outen, you get a lap dance everyday." (Curiously, he refers to his girlfriend by her full name throughout the interview.)*

In typical cocky style, he plays up to his enviable position. "I'm sleeping with the pin-up and the tabloids hate it." But beneath the bravado, there lies a tender-hearted fellow who's just met his girlfriends parents for the first time. "I cracked a couple of jokes and it all went very well..." he quips.

Are they about to settle down and start filling those 11 bedrooms? "Well, you never know, do you," he starts off, confidently. Is Denise pregnant? I ask, outright. "Well, all I can say is you never know," he continues maddeningly, with a chuckle. "You never, ever know."

*Further examination would be pointless, but if the pair haven't huddled excitedly around a Predictor Kit yet, it's only a matter of time. Just don't expect to hear about it in *Hello!* magazine. "We've turned them down six times already."*

So it's all Versace parties and Elle Style Awards is it, now they are a fabulous duo? "I don't think we are," he muses. "I'm Jamiroquai, and she's Denise Van Outen, separately. The Denise Van Outen I know goes out and works bloody hard, does her own thing, never bothers me when I'm doing mine. It's very different from being a very rich pop star with a wife that does bugger all, you know ... who just gets off on being a celebrity."

If this is a subtle dig at a previous girlfriend, who he has charmlessly referred to elsewhere as an "old cow", he says no more. But there's no doubt that he's in love with Denise and the pair's equally tenacious, work- and fun-loving temperaments probably mean they're a match made in heaven. Jay thinks being an only child has helped him decide who to trust. "I'm pretty sharp on who's who, the radar's out all the time."

Of his appearance in a kiss-and-tell incident, Jay laughs long and hard. "Oh yes, I enjoyed that. It made good reading." But then he would say that after being called a "four times a night perstud". Seventeen-year-old student Hal Jenkins described their encounter thus: "When we took off our clothes he was very skinny ... but he was tender and loving." Jay is pragmatic: "It's all a giggle, she got paid. I've done her a favour."

Get him on the subject of stalkers, however, and the good humour disappears. Famously Jay was clocked doing 111mph in his Ferrari racing home after a stalker broke in. "It comes with the territory, I suppose," he starts reluctantly. "But they just have to learn the lesson that I'm not the type of guy to get too interested in. Because I take matters into my own hands and if people want to come along and invade my privacy they will suffer the consequences, which will be very grim indeed."

He professes not to know where his female stalker ended up, but he was horrified to hear that a recent feature in The Times started with almost exact directions to his home. "That's why I want people to stay outside the gate, because I'm a person as well as Jamiroquai, I'm Jay, Jason Kay and I've got my own privacy. I understand that some of that is to do with the public supporting you, but that's still no excuse." He looks perturbed. "And with what's happened to Jill Dando it's so irresponsible."

He takes a tough line with anyone, fan or fanatic, who comes on to his territory. "I caught some lads come screeching up the drive here in a Mini the other day. I said 'What the fuck do you think you're doing?' and they said 'Oh sorry, we just thought...' 'What, you thought it was a public fucking road? Even though there's a big sign that says private?' Any potential trespassers should be feeling nervous by now. "I thought, if you hit my dog, or one of my cats, or one of the cars, I will kill you, with my bare hands ... They're not real fans, they're not real anything. It's like saying a hooligan is a proper football fan. They're not." The sly grin is gone, replaced by grim determination.

A quick tour of the house restores Jay's good humour. "The woman who owned it before me had the most appalling taste I've ever seen," he banters dashing Challenge Anneka style from room to room, floor to floor. He's in the process of redecorating. There are "shag pads" for the band, should they want to sleep over, with richly coloured carpets and walls; a snooker room; a wood-panelled library and, as they say in the trade, beautifully appointed reception rooms. Jay has, I can report, more than 50 pairs of trainers, and a TV the size of a small car. All, he freely admits, gifts.

He'd like to do more charity work this year, especially for the homeless organisation Shelter, but as head of a "corporation" that employs over 30 people, "all needing to get paid, to convince them to do something for nothing ain't that easy".

Meanwhile Jay is developing a range of clothing with Boss and a deal with Levi's, which all add to the coffers. The pleas to save the planet haven't gone away: it's just the worries about the bills have got more pressing - and the responsibilities that this slight 29-year-old has on his shoulders become apparent. "If this album flopped, I'd be in a worse situation than when I started. It's all got to be paid for," he says, surveying the acres, "and Monsieur Kay does actually have a mortgage."

"I want a number one album and single here and a top 10 album in America. That would be bloody lovely, anything above that is a bonus." There are, he wearily points out, another four albums after this one to go before his contract with Sony is fulfilled. "God I wish I'd signed for five."

Jay springs up, Tiggerish, to play with his dog. He can pretend to be put upon, but knows that, really, life is sweet and the critics can go hang. "All I want to know is that I can keep this house for the rest of my days and I want to make good music ... and have the odd sports car in the garage, obviously!"

If it all goes to plan, Jay, Denise, Iuga the Alsatian, Fritz and Tiger the cats (or Tits and Frigger, as Denise calls them), the 72 acres, sports cars, trout in the lake, the nesting swan and the thousands of trees can all live happily ever after. I think it will. Jamiroquai tour the UK from 7 June. The album, 'Synkronized' is released on 14 June.

JK Interview #14 | The Guardian

May 21st 1999

“Keep It Under Your Hat” By Ludovic Hunter-Tilney

Jay Kay rants on album four & himself.

Jamiroquai's lead singer isn't just a scruffy Herbert. Jay Kay tells Tony Farsides about musical credibility, Ferraris and Denise Van Outen.

Jay Kay's Buckinghamshire manor house is 500 years old. It lies in 72 acres of land. His home has a man-made lake in the garden and was once owned by an Archbishop of Canterbury. Parked outside are a gleaming black Ferrari and a grey James Bond-style Aston Martin. It's the classic rock star scenario, Mick and Marianne at Stargroves and John and Yoko in Tittenhurst Park all over again.

However, if the trappings of success may have changed little over the decades the world of the pop star has. Whilst for the 60s generation the obligatory country mansion mockingly symbolised the power and limitless horizons of a young new aristocracy, for the stars of the 90s the reality is more mundane. In Kay's case the house seems less a temple of hedonism than the biggest available symbol of security.

The trust is that, like so many jobs in the 90s, pop superstardom has become a short-term contract with only ever bigger-selling albums keeping the show on the road. Today's pop gods come with an in-built awareness of their own clay feet and a generational sense of caution. As Kay himself puts it: "It's like a cricket ball rolling on grass. You know it has to stop".

*In Jamiroquai's case it's safe to say the ball will not stop rolling just yet. The group's last album, *Travelling Without Moving*, sold a million copies in the UK and a further seven or so around the world. In addition, Kay picked up a Grammy and four prestigious MTV awards for the video to the groups' *Virtual Insanity*. Last summer *Deeper Underground*, from the soundtrack of *Godzilla*, shot straight in at number one.*

Simply put, from being the last refugees of the acid jazz movement, Jamiroquai are now in the George Michael league of success. A newspaper table of young entertainers recently estimated Kay's personal fortune at £15m. But the singer himself refutes this figure. "Fifteen million. I was just looking at it wondering, who's got the rest? Somebody somewhere's got a new holiday home", he says.

Despite all the changes, the public persona of the 29-year-old Kay has remained static. To most of those who fall outside Jamiroquai's fan base he simply remains the same jazz funk "prat in the hat". Likewise, Kay's famously antagonistic relationship with the press might have cooled a bit lately but their key interest remains the fast cars and, more recently, his relationship with TV supermodel Denise Van Outen.

To an extent Kay and his record company have been complicit in this. The marketing campaigns have played up the image of an almost cartoon-like dancing scruffy Herbert who likes Ferraris and soft drugs. However, whilst he might call himself "the space cowboy" in reality Kay's feet remain resolutely earthbound.

From day one Jamiroquai has been a tightly run ship. "It has to be", says Kay. "I remember when I got signed there was this other group who got signed for something ridiculous like a million quid and spent it all. Just went on holiday, never finished their album and spunked all the money. I just thought, no way".

Much of Kay's outlook comes from his upbringing by his single-parent mother. Karen Kay escaped her native Lancashire and job in the typing pool by forging a new career as a singer. Eventually settling in Ealing, west London, she did the club circuit both as a jazz singer, working with the likes of Ronnie Scott, among others, and as a cabaret signer. Jay Kay grew up as a child often sitting at the edge of the stage with a glass of Coke watching his mother sign for their supper.

This experience formed his own love of singing but also forged determinedly old-fashioned views about being an entertainer. "The work ethic and taking working and touring seriously. I think it's something that comes from my mother," Kay says, "Not to get away with what you can, To go out and do 25-minute shows. I will change things around and spend money on the sets." Whilst Jamiroquai are nominally a group, Kay is in fact signed to his record label, Sony, as a solo artist. Other band members are then paid wages and advances out of his money. As co-writer of the group's songs, keyboard player Toby Smith splits Jamiroquai's lucrative publishing income with Kay. Percentages are then also given to the other band members in recognition of their services and as an incentive to stay with the group. "Well, there has to be something in this for them", reasons Kay. "You can't have the band waiting at the bus stop with me waving from my latest Ferrari going, 'Thanks, lads'".

Meanwhile, Kay and Jamiroquai's manager Kevin Simpson have taken much of the business around the band in-house. The group have co-promoted most of their own tours. Kay has also now built his own studio on the grounds of his home in which the new album has been recorded. In the long term, this will eliminate virtually all Jamiroquai recording costs. Meanwhile, the organization around the band remains tight knit and unchanging, and many of those working for the group are old friends and associates from west London. Most band business is now conducted from the Buckinghamshire house and an afternoon at the manor leaves little doubt about who's in control. Kay is relentlessly hands-on with everything: from proof-reading the album credits to meeting with video director Jonas Akerlund about the final cut of a video for the group's new single, Canned Heat.

He's well-mannered and genial but the singer's tantrums are legendary. The merest sign of displeasure has those around walking on eggshells. Kay remains unapologetic for this autocratic manner. "I was brought up to believe that if you don't look after yourself, no one else will. And if you don't, people will shit on you and I'm not going out like that. That's really important to me."

For all Jamiroquai's recent success, those close to the band say the last 18 months have been the most difficult of Kay's career. This fact is reflected in Jamiroquai's new album Synkronized, which Kay says "is a very angst album".

The main reason for this disquiet was the departure midway through the album's creation of Jamiroquai's original bass player, Stuart Zender. The reasons surrounding Zender's exit remain vague, with Kay offering only: "It was best Stuart left, and did his own thing."

Although the ultimate decision to go was apparently Zender's own, it was precipitated by an interview the bass player gave to the Sun announcing he'd rather stay at home with his pregnant girlfriend, All Saint Melanie Blatt, than be with Jamiroquai. Jay's reaction to Zenders leaving was to scrap what was a

virtually completed, 10-track album and start from scratch, thereby removing any trace of Zender and avoiding any future “complications”.

Recording in little over four months in a barely-finished studio, the album features the hastily auditioned new bass player, Nick Fife. Its hard and nervy uptempo disco feel reflects the frantic atmosphere surrounding its creation. The whole Zender affair is also played out in one of the new album’s standout tracks, the bittersweet King For A Day.

Although no one close to the group will admit it, even the most cursory listen to the song’s lyrics reveal the most damning attack on a former band member since Jon Lennon threw How Do You Sleep? Paul McCartney’s way. Synkronized is perhaps Jamiroquai’s best record to date. It is more consistent than its three predecessors. The new album’s key innovation occurs sonically, with the addition of a harder digital edge to Jamiroquai’s trusty jazz-funk. A track called Supersonic almost verges on trance territory, and is set to be remixed by the Prodigy’s Liam Howlett. “I wanted a harder thing because, to be fair, some of the older tracks are not me”, explains Kay.” Virtual Insanity was a nice track, but it’s not what I’d get down to. I’m sick of being nice”, he says. Jamiroquai remain resolutely faithful to the 70s funk, soul, jazz and disco Kay grew up listening to as a teenager. The only CD visible in his studio is a James Mason album featuring the rare groove classic Sweet Power –whilst the tape machine in the kitchen pumps out the Staple Singers and Sly And The Family Stone. Kay appears almost wilfully ignorant of the current music scene. “Maybe I should pay more attention, but I don’t”, he admits.

This jazz-funk fundamentalism comes, according to Kay, not so much from the fact that Ealing was the centre for London’s mid-80s “rare groove” scene, which revived so much 70s soul and funk. Rather, it is his mother’s influence. “It stems from being around real musicians and live music”, he says. “You know, anything that’s got good horns. My mum was always into ‘good’ music. She was into the greats, not just what was around. So that had an effect on me.

It annoys Jay that Jamiroquai’s musical prowess goes largely ignored. Whilst the band have received plaudits from American heavyweights such as Quincy Jones and Maurice White of Earth, Wind And Fire, Jamiroquai fight to be taken seriously in the UK. “You’ve got a hundred bands doing what they do in the ilk of Oasis, and I’m not knocking them”, says Kay. “But how many have you got doing what we’re doing? We’ve always been the outside runners.”

Kay says he’s stopped caring what people think. He even shrugs off the inevitable media attention on his relationship with Denise van Outen. A week before we speak, the tabloids are running false stories saying the pair are now engaged. “They want us to get upset so they can split the relationship. What’s the best bit of news they can get? ‘Jay And Denise Split Up”, he says.

Certainly, the relationship appears solid and, according to the singer’s friends, is very genuine. Kay has talked publicly about having babies with Van Outen, and she is the obvious target of a new love song called Falling. “My builders like that track because they find it very funny when I sing ‘I get up in the morning””, adds Kay.

If the music press and tabloids will never love him, then Kay has found one section of the British media that does: the car media. Whilst he might not know who’s in the UK top ten, Kay does know his cars. The day prior to our meeting he’d been at a race track – testing a new Aston Martin for Top Gear. There he was interviewed by presenter and ex-racing driver Tiff Nedell. For Kay, it might as well have been a summit meeting with the Pope. “It’s funny what your aspirations are. I’m only half-bothered that I won a Grammy but to go on Top Gear seems like the best thing in the world”.

He's one of the premier pop talents we've got

Dave Pearce, Radio 1 DJ

"When Jamiroquai's records first dropped they had a new sound – the blackness of his voice and the Londonesque interpretation of modern soul. They've decided to stick with a winning formula and they've enjoyed great success with it. And as for Jay Kay – well, obviously I'm immensely jealous, 'cos he's got a Ferrari and is shagging Denise van Outen."

Mark Suterland, Editor, Melody Maker

"I like the fact he's an unashamed old school rock star, his life all fast cars, Denise van Outen and hanging out with supermodels at the Met Bar or whatever. Lots of current rock stars don't: most pretend being famous is an endless litany of woes, when we all know it isn't. If only he could put some of the excitement of his lifestyle into his music which is bland, very ordinary jazz funk. He's one of those rock stars who talks the talk, but doesn't walk the walk."

Neil Stevenson, Editor, Mimag

"He's a lively character, a very strange dancer and we're glad he's around. We like him for the remixes of his stuff, but find him slightly unusual, with all those fast cars and songs about rainforests."

Derek Bardowell, Music Editor, The Voice

"I can't begrudge him the success he's had with the music he's done. He's one of the few artists playing "real music" who are mainstream and in the charts – unlike most of the pop garbage that frequents them."

Toussaint Davy, Deputy Editor, Touch

"His enduring popularity comes from the fact that he's unique in what he's doing and you always know what you're getting. He started his groove 10 years ago, stuck at it, and it's just taken that long for everyone to catch up with him. He's basically one of the premier pop talents we've got"

Chris Philips, Kiss 100 DJ

"Jay Kay is the full package, a modern phenomenon steeped in the giants of music past but his understanding of what motivates a human being within a song is virtually unsurpassed in popular music culture."

JK Interview #15 | Heat Magazine

May 15th 1999

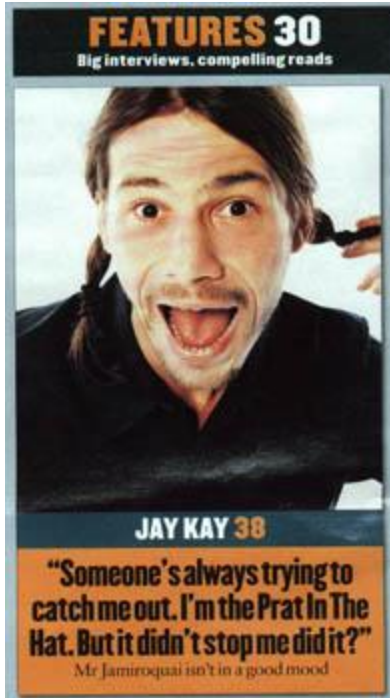
"The Heat Interview: Jamiroquai" By Sylvia Patterson

Jay Kay is angry and Heat is going to find out why...



He's got 15 million, a fleet of Ferraris, a country manor and Denise Van Outen. But Jamiroquai's Jay Kay is angry... about Tony Blair, Marilyn Manson, Steeps, Hello! and lots more besides. "Denise eats all my crisps," he complains to Sylvia Patterson.

Today, Jay Kay, 29, Him out of Jamiroquai, is The Dick Dastardly of Pop. He is in quite the worst mood he's flaunted in a public area for years. Storming into a photographic studio in north London, he circles twice around nothing at all like a particularly pissed off killer hornet, throws himself in a seat beside heat's tape-recorder, slaps his B&H tabs on the table and stares at his knees. He should be the happiest man alive. He's sold over 11 million albums. Steps out with Denise Van Outen. Likes his motors. Owns 11-bedroomed Horsenden Manor in thee Buckinghamshire countryside which stands on 70 acres of grounds and sports a lake and a river with trout in. And now he's about to bring us Synkronized, Jamiroquai's fourth album, their jolliest yet, or, as the disco-frilled single Canned Heat has it, he's got "canned heat in my heels". He should be laughing. But instead, his intense brown eyes are buried inside a frown, wispy hair whisking upwards, all dresses in black, supping deeply on the tea of Tetley's and bile for a world gone berserk. The tabloids' "favorite funk'in' Romeo" has a bee in his absent bonnet.



Come on, then, what's getting to you?

Getting to me? What's getting to me? Doing this. I do not like doing press/ I've got far more important things to do. It's tiring, it's boring. I'm there to sing, make music. What's the point? The music speaks for itself.

It can also be great having something to say ...

It can be, but for me it's been mostly a rough ride -- it's not exactly like we get the best press in the world. Why bother, to have things written about you that are mostly crap anyway? Like the shit I read the other day about getting engaged to Denise, getting married, all this rubbish, where do people get this shit from? [gets up, begins storming around in circles behind his seat]. Someone's always trying to catch me out. I'm The Prat In The Hat, I'm the white guy who makes black music, I'm the guy who's into the environment who drives a Ferrari. Ha! But it didn't stop me, did it? Eight million people bought the album, they know what it's about.



This is ridiculous. You should be having the time of your life.
Yeah! And there's a lot of things to do in life but sometimes it's just difficult. Personally, all I want to do is just get on the road and get out of this fucking country.

What stops you?

Well, luckily I've got a great girlfriend. Which is a result, 'cos the last one was an old cow.

Your relationship with model Tamzin Grenhill was quite volatile, wasn't it?

A pain in the arse. There's nothing worse if you're in the public eye to have someone just shouting at you in public. It's the most awful thing you can do to someone like me 'cos I'm a Capricorn and quite reserved, I don't like to be publicly embarrassed and I can't stand people that do that to me.



So Denise is a calming influence.

Yeah. She does her own thing, y'see, whereas the last one didn't do anything. I get the idea a lot of women want that these days but Denise isn't like that at all. We have a laugh together and that's what you need in a relationship.

What's the first thing you said to Denise?

"I'm really stoned."

Where were you?

Silverstone. Silverstoned.

[laughs]

And what did she say? "So am I?"

She said "oh".

Did you have vibes for her before you met her?

It's funny, yeah, I did actually. I didn't even know who she was, never seen her on telly, 'cos I'm never up that early. So I said, "Yeah, I'll go and do this photoshoot." And I kept saying "Who is she? Who is she?" and people said, "You'll like her, she's really good." And we were havong a real giggle so I said, "Come baack to my place, I'll cook us some dinner". So she did.

And did you "cook" her dinner?

I did.

What did you cook?

Steak and chips, mate. If anyone was expecting a julienne of carrots and asparagus and medallions of monkfish they were very wrong.



What's your recipe for success?

We don't see each other all the time and that's what keeps it good, when we do see each other we're always happy. Never had an argument.

Never?

I think we've had one, about a slice of tomato.

Too thick was it, or...

Heheheh... I don't bloody know. Stealing my tomato! She eats all my crisps. She can't half eat, Denise, packs it away.

How does Denise deal with your bad moods?

She's not around all the time. Got her own thing to do - some gangster film with Ray Winstone, Kathy Burke, Jonny Lee Miller, Jude Law. [the forthcoming Love, Honour And Obey] Heheheh, couple of scenes I'm looking forward to in that one. Unfortunately, my bird's always the tart. I can't wait for her to get nice prim roles, like Mrs. Doubtfire, where she actually keeps her clothes on, for once.

Must be ace beinng reasonably young, in love and having 11 bedrooms to play in.

Not 11 now. Half of them have been turned into something else. There's about four left! But that's what I wanted for, thinking about the time in my life when I have got kids. And hopefully I'll have them with her. I think I will. Yeah. Have to wait a little while, you have to be really careful when you do these different jobs, you have to have trust. Trust is everything in a relationship. And I trust her. And she trusts me. Comes a time when a man's philandering is over and done with.

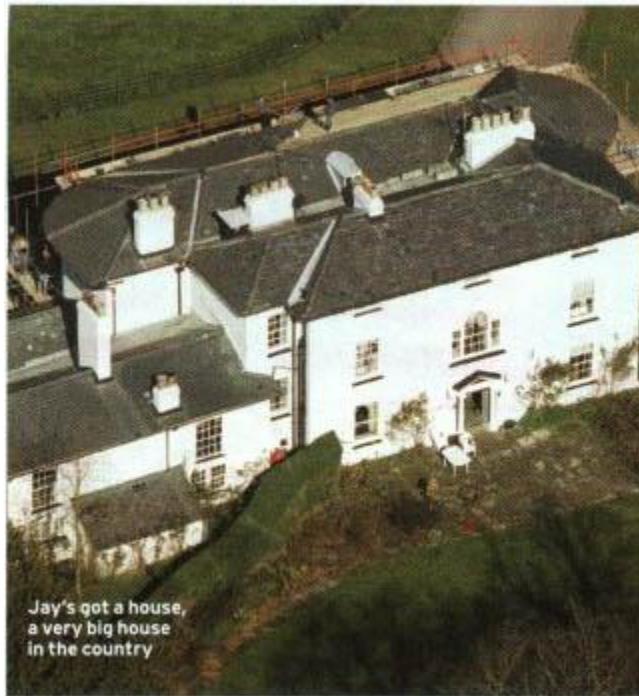
And yours is?

Yeah. And I've done plenty of philandering around the world. Oh yes. I'm not gay. Perks of the job. But after a while that all becomes crap and you want the quality things in life. You've just got to be realistic. She's an actress and I'm a singer. I have women throwing themselves at me and she has men throwing themselves at her, but it's a question of realising what you really want in life. I've every intention of being honourable fella. Which is good. For me.

What's the main thing that keeps you together?

Sense of humour. Also, we both work. Hard. If you've got one person that doesn't do any work, it's crap 'cos all they do

*is sit there and wait for you to come homee, don't get off their arses. If I was like that she wouldn't bother with me.
And vice versa.*



Denise is a really brilliant singer, we hear.

She's got quite a good little voice onn her. In fact she subjected me to 20 minutes of old tapes yesterday over the phone. Just left me there and I was shouting "Denise! Denise! Please speak to me! I've heard it, sounds great." Great singer... heheheh, pretty bloody awful music. Really bad... sort of poppy soul, I suppose. Bless her. Puts me through torture.

And she doesn't mind you saying her tunes are piffle.

[Carries on regardless.] Great voice, but I can think of a few other things I'd rather do with her than sit and listen to her tunes. "Can we not listen to your tunes and just have a shag instead?" Much more suitable, know what I mean?

You once said "she rides me into the ground that girl", charmingly enough.

Did I? Did I? Oops! Well there you go. That's what people do. I'm in love. And I enjoy it. For once. [Veers off, begins shouting at length about OK! magazine.] That tripe. Hello!, they make me laugh. Every two minutes they're ringing up going, [whiney voice] "Can we come round?" No you can't. Fuck off. I don't want you round my house, you noseey bastards, It's just sell-out. Pathetic. Holding hands over the mantelpiece. There's no point coming in anyway, haven't done any decorating, it's a shit-hole!

How much did they try and tempt you with?

250 grand, which I told them to stuff up their arse, stuff it as far you can get it up your arsehole.

So it isn't "Lord Of The Manor" mahogany antiques and gold bath taps akimbo.

No way! There's a whole lifetime to fill that place up with stuff.

What do your millions mean to you?

Dunno. Where are they? You've been reading too many stories in the papers.

***The Observer had you down as the 9th richest person under 30, with a fortune of 15 million.
My accountant's probably got a holiday home in Bermuda.***

***D'you have inner battles about whether you deserve all that loot?
I employ 30 people, that's a lot of fucking people, for a 29-year-old. Money isn't everything. I've got to be honest with you, I've bought a house, built a studio, I still have a bloody mortgage. And if the album just flopped I'd be fucked. For every pound I get paid, I end up with 30p after I've paid the tax man, management, accountants, lawyers, the band.
Not quite the same is it? So for every million pounds I earn, 700 grand does out the window.***



***I take it you're not a fan of Labour's tax reforms?
The Government is full of shit. And so are all those fucking poxy pop stars going down to 10 Downing Street. Now they've put the tax up and it affects people who do my job, I wouldn't be going around there drinking, I'd be going around there saying, "What the fuck are you gonna do about it, Tony?"
[Storming back, now with hair in lovely pig-tails.] Marilyn Manson! Fucking toss-pot! Anybody who's into Satan's got to be twwisted and weird!***

***Do you hold him responsible for the Colorado school massacre?
Absolutely! But that's just America. That some bored little American white trash would go and do shiit like that, 'cos that's all they do all day, they're just boring! Load of wankers [Begins hawking at groin where his underpants are, apparently, stuck]...***

***So what about the pop revolution? Would you recognise H from Steps if he walked in the room?
Steps? I'm not intrested in Steps. No intrest whatsoever. I don't give a shit! Take another ABBA chord why don't you and roughly sound like ABBA. Bloody Hell! It'll all end, people will get bored. [begins doing impersonation of someonee standing on a stage doing absolutely nothing.] What a thrilling performance. In a long coat. That's what I'm gonna do next year, fuck it. I'm gonna get out there and croon.***

So. You've almost made it to 30?

30 on the 30th of December. I spend a day as 30 in the old millennium, the rest of my life in the new one. All that there. I've done alright up to 30.

*Jamiroquai's new album, **Synkronized**, is due for release on 14 June.*

JK Interview #16 | Music Innit

May 4th 1999

"Hats Off For Jay Kay" By Chris

Jamiroquai's Jay Kay in an detailed interview on life & album four.



*Mate-from-sticks to author, in quiet London street: **"Bet you 'ave a flash life down here hangin' round all those pop stars..."** Author to sticksman: **"Nah, it's just a job like any other..."***

One nanu-second later a black, open-top Lamborghini roars up and stops at the lights.

*"Oi, Chris, 'ow ya doin', mate," comes a loud West-London accent. It's **Jay Kay**, founder and leader of **Jamiroquai**, not one week on from our interview and so with my ugly journo mug still vaguely towards the front half of his butterfly mind. **"Drop you anywhere?"** he enquires with typical friendliness.*

*Sticksman to author, having turned ashen: **"You go mate. I'll get the bus."***

***Don't believe the hype**, brothers and sisters: Jay Kay is really a nice bloke. He might drive like a fucking maniac. He may sometimes appear loud and flash and too-bloody-rich-by-half, **the mouthiest git in the beer garden**, the guy with the TV presenter blonde for a girlfriend and the fastest wheels in the car park. But, actually, he's a lot more than that.*

*He's bought himself an 11-bedroom manor house in Buckinghamshire, with a lake and an island and resident ghost, for a start. Oh yeah, and he happens to be selling albums by the ship-load - around seven million and counting on the last one, thank you very much - not to mention accepting tributes from muso-gods like **Stevie Wonder** and Earth, Wind & Fire leader **Maurice White** after gigs.*

*Not bad for an Ealing kid who **admits to dealing in funny fags** and to "robbing and stealing" to buy the equipment to record his first demos.*

*It couldn't be more different now. In the old pool-house, now state-of-the-art studio in which the new Jamiroquai album, **'Synkronized'**, has been recorded this past six months, he reveals how slowed-down and feet-on-ground he's become of late:*

"Believe it or not, I'm a lot calmer now than I used to be. I didn't buy this place to make a rock 'n' roll statement. I bought it to have a place to be, to park my cars, to build a studio, to live."

On the other hand... at the last count there were two Ferraris, three BMWs, an Aston Martin, a Mercedes and the aforesaid Lamborghini all snorting happily in the garage.

But sometimes they're not. Like recently, when he was pulled over by the police doing 110mph - in third gear - in his yellow 1964 Ferrari GTO ("Like a banana - only faster") on the M40. He didn't lose his licence over that one, but only because the men in blue accepted his explanation that a female stalker had just telephoned him from the grounds of his house to tell him she was about to go inside and inspect the contents of his laundry basket. Or whatever it is girls do.

Sometimes it scares him to think what other people manufacture about him in their minds. And sometimes it makes him angry:

"I don't enjoy being portrayed as some cocky, rich bastard who thinks everyone else is below him. I'm not like that at all. Yeah, I'm confident and I have a opinions, but that doesn't make me arrogant. A lot of people misunderstand me. I'm compassionate. I care about people, about the world we live in. And I've got no time for nasty people, or for bullies."

*Jay hopes that 'Synkronized' will at last allay one of his bug-bears: that no-one takes Jamiroquai's music seriously enough for them to be held up as one of Britain's most accomplished bands - alongside groups like **Radiohead** and (until recently) **The Verve**.*

"What the fuck do we have to do before we're feted like that?" he asks, when the subject comes up. "This band works hard. Like, when we cut this album, we first had to build the studio and then my bass player, Stuart Zender, decided to branch out on his own halfway through the project and we had to find a new bassist and re-record the tracks. The songs don't write themselves y'know. And when we play live, we really play."

*The other thing Jay wants Synkronized to achieve is help **restore the funky side of disco to its rightful place on the pedestal of pop history.***



*"This is an upbeat album, a harder album than before because... it's the way I feel. Some of the stuff we did before... well, it's good and I'm still proud of it, but it's really not me. I mean, I wouldn't get down to a track like 'Virtual Insanity' personally. I don't feel like being that nice. "Y'know, we hoped to get Quincy Jones to help on some of this album. He didn't in the end, so we just took his ideas and did it ourselves anyway - that's why the 'Canned Heat' has that string arrangement. And when Maurice White came backstage at one of gigs and told us he thought we were brilliant, I told him, 'Well, actually, we're just trying to copy you'. **Earth, Wind & Fire - now that's what I call music.**"*

The single 'Canned Heat' is released by Sony2 Records on 24th May. The album 'Synkronized' will be released June 7th.

**JK Interview #17 | The Times
July 11th 1998**

"The Big Interview - Kay Class" By Nigel Williamson

Jamiroquai's Jay Kay lives the rock-star idyll in his 11-bedroomed country house. But, as Nigel Williamson discovered, life can have its hardships - even if you do get to sleep with Denise Van Outen.



Jamiroquai's Jay Kay lives the rock-star idyll in his 11-bedroomed country house. But, as Nigel Williamson discovered, life can have its hardships - even if you do get to sleep with Denise Van Outen.

To find Jay Kay these days you have to drive an hour out of London down the M40, head towards Princes Risborough in the heart of the Buckinghamshire countryside and know the un-signposted turning to Horsenden. Kay, the 28-year-old leader of Jamiroquai, moved into Horsenden Manor last October and is living the contented English rural idyll to the hilt. He meets us with his nine-month-old Alsatian Luga snapping at his heels. And like any proud house-owner he immediately offers a guided tour of the stately pile where Charles I is reputed to have once stayed and which is said still to be haunted by the ghost of the playwright Sheridan. Part of the moat which surrounded the original manor remains. The estate boasts 72 acres of parkland, and there is a lake large enough to accommodate an island in its centre.

Kay lives alone in the house with its eleven bedrooms and six bathrooms, although Denise Van Outen, the 24-year-old presenter of Channel 4's Big Breakfast and his girlfriend since the end of last year, spends most weekends and is due later in the afternoon. His collection of classic cars - two Ferraris, three BMWs, an Aston Martin, a Lamborghini and a Mercedes - are housed in the former stable block. Housekeepers, gardeners and carpenters bustle around. After years living in a bachelor flat in Paddington, Kay, who is taking a late breakfast by the heated outdoor pool, is clearly enjoying the transformation from Space Cowboy to English country gent.

"I wanted somewhere I could put everything to do with my life in one place," he says. "Somewhere I could build a studio and have my motor cars instead of having them scattered all round London. I'm also very insecure about what's going to happen to the world. Here you can be totally sufficient. There's a spring at the top of the lake, we've got a huge Victorian kitchen garden and there are trout in the river."

Kay seems unlikely to follow the Rolling Stones into tax exile. His manager complains that he cannot book Jamiroquai on overseas tours for more than four weeks at a stretch because Kay refuses to be away from home for any longer. "He seems to miss the rain," he tells me with incredulity.

Kay has his own rationale: "Four weeks in Japan eating raw fish is enough and I can't deal with it," he says. "Touring is hectic and stressful. There has to be a cut-off point and you have to have somewhere to come back to. I love this country and there's nothing finer than an English country garden. Why would anybody want to be anywhere else? You can keep your beaches. I'm just not interested."

His new location has also had a calming effect on his famously excitable personality, although he still leaps around like a jack-in-the-box. "I couldn't even get through the front door with all my bags in the last place and I used to get really angry about things, get in a bad rage and a mood. Here I've definitely calmed down. It still happens, but not quite so often or with such vehemence."

We are here ostensibly to talk about Jamiroquai's new single Deeper Underground, a slice of typically robust jazzy funk from the soundtrack of the film Godzilla. The single is accompanied by one of the most remarkable - and expensive - music videos ever. As the foot of the reptilian monster bursts out of a cinema screen, the auditorium is flooded and a soaked Kay dances acrobatically across the backs of the cinema seats.

The video cost £650,000 for a three-minute clip, yet Kay is underwhelmed. "Videos have become a necessary evil, but I'd prefer to go back to the old days when you put a song out on a single with another song on the B-side. It wasn't my million dollars they spent and I'd have made it for \$20,000 and given the rest to charity, but that's the way they wanted to do it. They spent £120 million on the film."

Kay, who has a reputation as something of a control freak, was given a tight brief by the film's producers and did not find the experience an entirely pleasurable one. "They rejected my original lyrics. They didn't think the kids would like to feel that primal fear, that Godzilla is a killer. They gave me an hour to rewrite them and insisted that I couldn't mention Godzilla or monsters at all, which seemed a little strange."

Then during the shooting of the video Kay cut his hand and injured his pelvis. "You couldn't keep your balance because it was so slippery and I had to wear the same wet clothes for two days," he explains. Later he admits that the pelvic injury may have had nothing to do with the video shoot ("to be honest I think I did it shagging - she rides me into the ground, that Van Outen girl," he says wickedly) but you wonder why he put himself through the Godzilla ordeal. He has a pragmatic answer. "It's a couple of years since the last album and the new one won't be out until March next year. In the fickle world of pop we needed something to tide us over exposure-wise."

The attitude reminds you that Kay comes from an old-fashioned showbiz background and that the show-must-go-on mentality has stuck. Born Jason Kay in Blackburn but raised in Ealing, he did not know his Portuguese father. His mother Karen Kay was a minor-league cabaret singer who took her son on the road everywhere she went. As a result Kay grew up on a diet of travelling and live music, and by his teens he knew that he, too, wanted to be a singer.

After one single on a small independent label, at the age of 22 he signed an unprecedented eight-album deal with Sony. The three albums to date - Emergency on Planet Earth (1993), Return of the Space Cowboy (1994) and Travelling Without Moving (1996) - have all sold in the millions, with the last one topping six million sales world-wide.

On the surface, it seems a classic tale of overnight success; but Kay now reveals an apprenticeship as a teenage criminal on the streets of west London while struggling to set up and equip a band in the late Eighties.



I knew that if I got my voice on to a tape I could get myself a deal but the truth is that I was thieving and robbing and selling marijuana in order to raise money to buy equipment," he says.

"Nobody has heard any of this before but I got run out of my area because people thought I had grassed somebody up. I had five rucks in one day - someone tried to CS-gas me and someone tried to stab me. I hadn't grassed anybody up but it was so heavy I went home and holed up for six months and wrote songs. That was when I designed the logo and came up with the name of the band."

Kay still has something of the street cunning about him, a bit of a latter-day Artful Dodger. Even his record company describes him as "loud and opinionated" and he has received a rough ride in the press for being arrogant. He admits to being hurt by the criticism.

"I don't like being portrayed as some nasty, cocky, flash bastard who thinks everyone else is below him," he says. "I'm not like that. I'm confident and I have an opinion but that doesn't make me arrogant. A lot of people misunderstand me. I'm compassionate, I care about the world I live in. I've got no time for cruel, nasty people and bullies."

Despite his new-found, lord-of-the-manor status, Kay insists that success has not changed him. They all say that, but with him, you get the feeling it's true - for now, at least. "This guy came up here the other day and said you've got it all here, haven't you? Ferrari, big garden, swimming pool, nice bird, just like the real pop star life. But I'm not following any handbook on how to be a pop star. I just want the same as everybody else - a nice house, a family and to die a nice happy grandfather."

Another sore point has been the suggestion that Kay has somehow ripped off black music. In particular, I wonder how he feels about the constant comparisons of his voice with that of Stevie Wonder. "On one level it is flattering but it would be nice to be recognised in my own right," he says. "We are very different. Stevie has a much better voice than me. He can play everything and I can't play anything. But he paid me a great compliment when I met him. He said 'hey, great song', and started singing Virtual Insanity. I was in tears about that. The great man himself said it was all right, which was nice after years of being told I was plagiarising his music."

He hopes that Wonder will duet on the fourth album Jamiroquai are about to start recording in the new studio Kay has at Horsenden. "If you heard us together he's got a much stronger voice than me but I think they would fit really well because my voice is a little bit higher. My voice tends to go to the same places and sits with the same keys and chords as him but I've never tried to copy anyone."

Having their own studio is going to transform the way Jamiroquai works, says Kay. "This will be the best album we have done; we never used to get a chance to rehearse properly. We can become much more prolific. We can touch on different styles of music. We're looking to get people to come down to stay with us and work on the album. It's going

to be tighter and rockier and funkier with some light jazzy sweet stuff. I hope Quincy Jones and Roy Ayers are going to work with us."

*Despite his success and fame Kay is surprisingly prone to moments of self-doubt. "I feel we are treated like a bit of a joke," he says out of the blue. "What do we have to do before we are treated as real artists? We're a good f**king band. A lot of people are jealous because it looks as if it is done with consummate ease but it isn't. There is a lot of work and effort."*

Another source of criticism is that Kay's support of green causes is hypocritical alongside his love of fast cars. "People say to me 'you are talking about the environment and you're driving a Ferrari'. But I liked cars before I knew what a tree was. I don't think that makes me a hypocrite. The Government and car manufacturers do nothing for the environment."

He does at least put his money where his mouth is and gives a sizeable chunk of his royalties to Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace. He also supports Tusk Force which protects endangered species around the world, and he has sponsored a rhino - now named after him - in Kenya. "There's a horny old rhino out there called Jay. I'd like to bring some of them here. I have a vision to use this land as an animal sanctuary," he says.

He attributes his love for expensive cars to years spent trekking around Britain with his mother. "When you spent half your childhood bouncing about in the back of a convertible Triumph Herald you learn to appreciate cars like Ferrari and Aston Martin. I get my buzz from putting my right foot down. I'm a speed freak."

But perhaps not for much longer: Kay has been collecting speeding tickets almost as often as he collects gold records, and is waiting to hear whether he is about to lose his licence. "I was doing 110 in the Ferrari and I was only in third gear. It's a good thing I didn't get into fourth," he says.

*Kay has just turned down £1.5 million to do a Pepsi commercial. "Our music is more spiritual than that. They can take their millions and stick them. If I took the money I would give half of it to an animal charity, but then people would say I'd just done that to look good so that I could keep the other half. You can't win but the lyrics on the album would be meaningless if I went and took money off a f**king canned drinks company."*

He may be brash and loud, but there is also an honesty about Kay that is enormously attractive. I had not asked him about his relationship with Van Outen, although there had been several passing references. Then, as if he is disappointed that I haven't, he blurts out: "Aren't you going to ask me about Denise?" He is obviously head-over-heels in love with the woman. Her nickname for him is Morph.

"She's cool, she's very funny and she makes me laugh," he says. "We'll probably go for a swim in the pool when she gets here. We've done pretty well at keeping out of the media glare and we are never going to do that bloody awful Hello! crap." A space cowboy's home, it seems, is his castle.

Deeper Underground is released on Monday.

**JK Interview #18 | GRAMMY Magazine
April-May 1998
"Cat In The Hat" By Wyeth Kane**

Jay Kay talks about post-GRAMMY winning life, including a possible foray into acting

Jamiroquai's frontman and founder Jason "Jay" Kay figures people won't recognize him in America, modestly attributing most of his notoriety to his floppy chapeau that has become the symbol for his jazz-funk-pop fusion band.

"People stop me in the street now and again," he says, "but I can actually mostly walk about without my hat, because nobody knows who I really am. Its only recently, 'cause I've been on the TV without my hats on, that people have started to get to know my face, especially over in this country [England]. But in the States, I should think I can walk around most places I like, with or without a hat."

That may be a stretch. Jamiroquai has pulled off quite a hat trick. With a platinum album, a darkhorse GRAMMY win for Best Pop Performance for a Duo or Group and a bevy of MTV Music Video Awards, there is a growing body of Jamiroquai fans that could pick Jay out in any crowd.

"I go shopping in it," he says, laughing about the hat that has become his identity. "The thing you have to remember is that I was wearing those hats before I started music proper. I would go clubbing in those hats and stuff."

Without the musical goods, however, Jay could have walked around in a clown suit and it wouldn't have mattered. Thankfully, that's never been a problem for the band. The debut album, Emergency On Planet Earth, crashed into the charts at No.1 in June, 1993 making Jamiroquai the top-selling British debut act of that year.

At a time when machines and faceless, soulless vocalist threatened to take over the dance-club music scene, Jamiroquai arrived with a live act where--sacre bleu!--musicians actually played instruments and sang live. Fans of soul, funk and disco immediatly latched on.

Lanky and charismatic, Jay was a big part of the appeal. Loud and opinionated, he was known for brash statements that were immediatly gobbled up by the controversy-hungry British media.

The second album, Return of the Sapce Cowboy, went on to platinum sales in the U.K., setting the stage for the band's third album, its U.S. breakthrough Travelling Without Moving, which was supported by a long U.S. tour.

Despite the success of that record, the video awards and the GRAMMY nomination, there's still room for Jamiroquai to grow in the U.S. In a record industry that lately has seen more than its share of one-hit wonders and video-based "music" acts, Jay is acutely aware of what Jamiroquai needs to do to sustain its career.

"We want to to be an album band, and I think we arre, after three albums," he says. "There are a lot of bands coming in and out of the charts, and in some respects, I feel sorry for them because I think they are under the delusion that for having a hit single, you're going to be kept on and have a 10- or 12- or 15- year career in this business. And I think they are being a little naive to believe that."

Jamiroquai formed in 1992 in Great Britain, creating a massive underground buzz with When You Gonna Learn, which was initially released on London independent label Acid Jazz. Besides Jay, the band includes keyboardist Toby Smith, bassist Stuart Zender, drummer Derrick McKenzie, guitarist Simon Katz and didgeridoo player Wallis Buchanan.

Work has commenced on Jamiroquai's fourth album, which Jay anticipates dropping on the record company sometime in the fall. "But don't hold me to that," he says. "This one's going extra well. I've got three of what I would call great, great 'feels' out of it."

Fans of Jamiroquai's grooves on previous albums may be surprised at the new effort. "This album's going to be hardcore," says Jay. "I'm stuttering during making it, already. We're going to take a new direction on this one, so I'm gettin a bit rocky."

The energy may come from the new accessibility of work. With the 48-track studio under construction, "We're getting a bit prolific now that we've got all the equipment around us. I'm somebody who likes to get on with it and get things done."

That attitude extends to plans for 1998. Jay already has a full itinerary of how he'll spend the post-GRAMMY part of 1998.

"I'm going to be out on tour. And cooking, yes. Absolutely cooking. We do preproduction till basically the end of May, and at the end of May we go into my studio. Then we get whoever we need in, play it all at once live, and we may well have it sort of properly recorded and mixed within the space of about three months, which would give us a month off to go on holiday and do whatever we need to do."

Included in that schedule are plans for a few singles on film soundtracks (all hush-hush at the moment) and possibly a toe-dip into the acting waters for Jay.

"When I was a kid, I use to do a lot of acting, and obviously I haven't done it for a while. I get offered films every week--little film you know--and I think its about time. It's well within my capabilities", he laughs. "I've always been a bit of a Sir Laurence, anyway." Hats off!

**JK Interview #19 | Los Angeles Times
December 7th 1997**

"Don't Stop The Insanity" By Robert Hillburn

"Jamiroquai's Jason Kay likes the rock star glitz brought on by the hit 'Virtual Insanity.' But he also wants his band 'to last for 15 or 20 years.'"

Jamiroquai's Jason Kay likes the rock star glitz brought on by the hit 'Virtual Insanity.' But he also wants his band 'to last for 15 or 20 years.'

"Excuse me, what was the question again?"

The first time Jason Kay, the leader of British soul-pop band Jamiroquai, loses his place during an interview because a pretty woman is walking by, you dismiss it as a gag by a playful pop star.

As he leans forward in his chair on the patio of a West Hollywood hotel and watches the woman until she moves out of sight, he sure seems to be exaggerating.

But Kay, 27, gets distracted by passing women nearly half a dozen more times during the hour-- and he's too good a showman to repeat the same joke so many times.

Clearly, Kay--who may be best known in this country as the guy who wears the funny hat in Jamiroquai's "Virtual Insanity" video-- enjoys the life of a pop star. He recently bought a 42-acre country estate in England and he tools around back home in a dozen pricey sports cars, the spoils of having sold more than \$125 million worth of albums over the last five years.

Part of Jamiroquai's appeal is that Kay radiates good times on stage. Through the group's music leans a bit too much on identifiable '70s soul and funk strains, Kay himself brings a winning sense of individuality to his concerts, where he combines moves as fluid as Prince's with a disarming sense of humor.

"You know what I love about this country?" he asked during the band's recent Universal Amphitheatre show, looking out of the crowd with the seriousness of a man about to share a profound discovery. "Gatorade!" he shouted, picking up a bottle and taking big gulps from it. "I love the stuff."

It's clear during the hotel interview that Gatorade isn't the only thing Kay likes to drink. It's midday and Kay winces at the bright sun as he takes off his dark glasses. He says he was "thrown out of the bar" the night before.

As soon as he sits down, he orders a bloody Mary. When the waitress returns with the drink, he frowns. "Oh, I'm sorry, baby. I forgot to tell you: I don't want any pepper in it. But just leave it here, I'm sure one of the others [in the band] will take it. Just bring me another one without pepper." He ends up drinking both. "Don't want anything to go to waste now, do we?" he offers.

Asked about his adjustment to the band's escalating popularity, Kay says, "What's not to like? I think too many music people are sullen, moody individuals who are either miserable in their music or in their personal life, sometimes both.

"When you do what you want to do, you should enjoy yourself. To me, music has always been about positiveness. . . a reason to dance or have fun. It's easy being miserable. Music should help lift you out of your woes."

It's easy when watching Kay's love of the spotlight to think of him as the Liam Gallagher of British soul music.

As was the cocky Oasis lead singer, Kay was born in Manchester and seems wholly consumed with a legendary act that blossomed in the '60s. Instead of Gallagher and the Beatles however it's Kay and Stevie Wonder. But Kay isn't too keen on the Gallagher comparison.

"Don't like it" says Kay who speaks with the speed of his stage moves, often causing his words to run together. "Each to his own, I suppose, but my hang-up with Liam is that his attitude is wrong. You can't treat people like [that]. Remember, the people you meet on the way up . . . Well, you know the rest. He's even called me a wanker once. I wasn't brought up like that."

He pauses briefly to watch yet another woman move along, but he doesn't lose his place this time.

"That doesn't mean you won't have your moment. Like, you've caught me in a bad time. I feel like a guy who has been running and running and running for the last seven years and it's time to sit back and reassess everything.

"Everybody's going, 'Isn't it great what Jamiroquai has achieved?' Well, to me, this is nothing. This is just a good foundation for a band I want to last for 15 or 20 years. I'm not interested in just being today's pop star. I want a career, like Stevie Wonder or Sting or Queen.

The more Kay talks, the more you sense a seriousness and ambition that aren't readily apparent from the group's music and concerts. But it's a trait that Jeff Ayeroff, who runs Sony's Work label with Jordan Harris, noticed when they began working with Kay more than two years ago.

"Jay is very serious about his music and his career," Ayeroff says. "He knows where he wants to be, and that's essential in an artist. Very few artists without his kind of drive succeed. The lackadaisical ones don't succeed, and the ones who don't have a sort of vision about who they are usually don't succeed." Kay grew up around show biz, watching his mother, singer Karen Kay perform in clubs around the world and hearing about her struggles with agents, managers and club owners.

"My mom was an incredibly talented woman who played on the same stage in Hamburg as the Beatles when she was 17," says Kay, who was raised by his mother when his parents split soon after his birth.

"She was into quality music and I grew up hearing . . . the Beatles, Stevie Wonder, Dinah Washington. But she also suffered at the hands of [businessmen] who spent all her money."

When Kay started his own band, he remembered his mother's business encounters and vowed to concentrate as much on the business side of his career as on the musical.

Though he was enthralled by the dance-music world, Kay wasn't caught up in the turntable deejay or synthesizer focus of hip-hop and techno. He preferred live musicians who played in the style of '70s soul.

So he assembled Jamiroquai, whose core lineup of four other musicians is extended to 10 these days for live shows. The group's first album, 1993's "Emergency on Planet Earth," made Kay a star in England and much of Europe. The packages, whose lyrics dealt largely with the environment and other social issues, sold nearly 2 million copies.

The second album, 1994's "Return of the Space Cowboy," sold a bit over 2 million (as with the debut, predominantly outside the U.S.). By this time, however the lyrics were more party minded. Q magazine recently called "Return" one of the 25 best dance collection ever made. The group's third album, "Travelling Without Moving," has sold more than 6 million copies around the world and broken into the Top 30 in the U.S.

Many critics, however, have complained about the derivativeness of the Jamiroquai sound. It's a touchy point with Kay.

"What you basically had was these people saying here's this white guy plagiarizing black music," he says. "But I'm not like those people who build their songs around samples. We're writing songs ourselves and playing them. To me, it's like saying if we brought in a string quartet, we'd be plagiarizing Bach.

"Besides we never tried to hide our influences. When we first started doing interviews, I went on and on about how much I loved 'Innervisions' and how Stevie Wonder was my hero. So what happens? Next thing I'm reading this magazine and it says this kid thinks he's the new Stevie Wonder."

One of the joys of his life was meeting Wonder recently at an MTV event. "He was everything that I hoped he would be," Kay enthuses. "I introduced myself and he said, 'Oh, you the one who did "Virtual Insanity." Nice tune.' . . . I thought, 'Wow, Stevie Wonder knows our tune.' It was like getting a gold seal or something."

Much of Jamiroquai's audience in this country found the band through MTV, which declared "Virtual Insanity" the video of the year. Besides the music, the video showcased the charm of Kay, who danced about like a free spirit under his furry Mad Hatter - style hat. (It's actually fake fur," he points out.)

Kay has been wearing colorful headgear ever since the days in England when he'd spend hours on the dance floor in clubs. The hats were like a signature that other kids remembered, and they also served a utilitarian purpose. To keep his longish hair out of his eyes, he says. He designs some of his own hats and has them made by a millinery in London.

But the band's music has improved since the first two albums. The high-stepping "Cosmic Girls" has humor and spice, while "Alright" has such a snappy, Bee Gees- driven pulse that it would have been one of the highlights of the "Saturday Night Fever" soundtrack.

Ayeroff, of the Work label, thinks the success of the "Traveling" album in this country is a major breakthrough for the band.

"We're going to probably sell 1.5 million copies of this album [in the U.S.] but I think it really is just the beginning for him" he says. "I think for a long time Jay didn't believe that America was going to take to him, but seeing what's happening now, he knows he has an opportunity on the next record to be huge, and he's not going to let the opportunity slip away."

On the hotel patio, Kay stares at the bottom of the second bloody Mary glass and smiles.

"It's really been a hectic time," he says of his escalating U.S. success. "There weren't a lot of people who believed in us at first, but that's OK. You should have to prove yourself. I've got to a stage now where I can sit and take a breather. I

can afford to not put out the next album until 1999. I want to take a step back as a musician and as a person. We've got the people's attention now, so we have to take it to the next level."

As if self-conscious about sound too serious about his work, Kay suddenly leans forward, turns his head and asks, "Now where is that waitress?"

**JK Interview #20 | Request Magazine
December 1997**

"White Chocolate Swirl" By Mark Binelli

JK reflects on the events of 1997

His bodyguard shows up first, carrying a hat box. Moments later, Jamiroquai frontman Jason Kay emerges from the lobby of Atlanta's Four Season's Hotel. Most Americans discovered the diminutive Brit with the oversized voice (and tragic taste in headgear) after MTV Buzz Binned his neosoul band's breakthrough single, 'Virtual Insanity' - easily the most memorable Stevie Wonder hit since 'Don't Drive Drunk'.

These days, Kay is unofficially giving lessons on how to be a rock star. Step one: Skip sound check to go for a swim. (Jamiroquai drummer Derrick McKenzie often doubles as vocalist during sound checks, according to Kay's manager.) Step two: Reschedule the interview you'd scheduled for post-sound check to postswim. Step three: Run late and re-reschedule the interview for the backseat of the hotel's black Mercedes, en route to the venue. Step four: Start talking.

So you've been together for about five years?

Yes. I started on my own, really, when I was 18. It was clear that the way to get the record deal - that's what it's all about - would be to get the voice on tape with a decent tune. At the time, everyone was into house and there was not really a forum for this kind of stuff, so it was touch and go whether anybody would really dig this fellow singing, but I knew with the voice, I couldn't really see - record companies being record companies - how they could say no. Without meaning to sound arrogant.

I think Americans have this image that you're a brand new group.

Well, I'm happy for them to have that. We keep getting nominated for Best Newcomer [peers out of window as the limo pulls onto the expressway]. Look at this six-lane highway! Phenomenal stuff, man! I mean, if I had my Lamborghini here, there would be so much trouble! This says to me, shouts, 180. Straight line, like a bullet! So sorry, what was your question?

Do you think the core is still your voice?

Um, well, you know, you like to think so, don't you? I don't think it's just the voice. I think it's the quality of the tune writing. What I'm trying to say is, I don't think you're going to wake up tomorrow morning and hear someone who sounds exactly like us. Let's face it, there's more than a few groups that sound like each other.

What about critics who always mention Stevie Wonder?

Well, I'll tell you why I just smile and grin-and-bear, because I met him the other day and he was humming my tune. And he was quite happy about it. And when I asked him if I could do a cover of 'Golden Lady', he said yes.

Were you nervous?

I actually cried afterward. You know, when somebody's, like, that good and you'd like to be - well, you know you won't be that good, but you like to feel like somebody noticed.

Do you think too much is made of your race?

Well, yeah, I think too much is made of everybody's race, to be perfectly frank. You know, people are people and we all

live in this little pot together and should try to get along. What annoys me more than anything else is when people say, "Well, if you'd have been a black guy, you wouldn't have got the deal". Well, let's just hold up a minute. The fact is, you don't just get deals because of your colour. Yeah, this industry is run largely by white people. This isn't to say that there was no quality to what I was offering, because with no quality we wouldn't have three albums and quadrupled sales with the last album, and no one's telling me that was just hype. Cause they'd given up hyping us by the time of the second album. They wanted to kick me in my balls while I was already on the floor.

How has your life changed this year?

Very little, man. Obviously, yeah, sure. I've got some of the things I've wanted to have in life, but by no means all of it, because I know there's more to life than just driving a fucking ferrari. Four Seasons is nice! [grips my arm and grins] I'd be lying to you if I said Four Seasons wasn't nice, but it wasn't always like that. [points out window] See that Comfort Inn right there? That red sun [logo] used to strike terror in our hearts. Also, what this does, it pays a lot of us, from him [points to bodyguard] to him [points to driver, who is actually a Four Seasons employee], to the people in the back to the retainers to the boys in the band. Cause, you know, I'm the only one signed to the record company. We're a band because I want them to feel like they're part of something and give them some publishing and write the tunes with them, when I could just go write em with any old - then again, I wouldn't have a band, would I? That's the difference. You haven't got a band at all; you've got some session musicians.

Does it seem weird to you that videos cement an image in people's mind, like the hat?

Yeah, well, I like that. I like the image to be cemented. That was part of the thing about having a hat. Of course, part is, if you can imagine me jumping about with hair like this onstage. The hat was there long before I was in the group. I was jumping around clubs tripping my face off with that hat on.

Your hats are sort of like Elton John's sunglasses.

Identity, I think, is very important. You've got to have it, haven't you?

So what do you see yourself doing in 10 years?

I see myself doing this in 10 years, no doubt about that. Fifteen, maybe something else.

JK Interview #21 | Time Out

December 1997

"Jamiroquai In The Hot Seat" By Arwa Haider

JK talks about the Battersea Power Station gig

The Battersea Power Station gig is a benefit for both 'Tusk Force' and the 'Marcia Lawes Campaign'; what influenced you to support these two very different causes?

'I've always been fascinated with animals and wildlife, from domestic pets through to African animals like elephants and rhinos. I decided to get more directly involved with them after talking with Helena Christensen, who's already done some work with Tusk force. I'm hoping to go on a trip to Africa with them in the New Year. The Marcia Lawes case is a tragedy. I've met some of her family, in fact there are a few people in common between them and the band. That's how I became aware of her murder by a Scotland Yard informant who was allowed to operate outside the law. She's left two young kids behind and we wanted to do something to help.'

When Jamiroquai first burst on to the scene, the retro-flavoured element of your sound was striking and novel in itself. Since then, many other contemporary acts have incorporated similar retro soul and funk influences. But how do you think your music has developed since the early '90s?

The inspiration for our music has remained the same but musically we've developed massively through playing and writing together solidly for the last five years. It's become an instinctive thing and

doing things like our own remixes to go alongside those by well-known DJs has added to our musical flavour, which is retro and modern at the same time.'

You've played countless gigs in different countries over the years, including a very recent American tour. But what appeals to you about playing a location like Battersea Power Station?

'Having been away for so long, to play our last gig of the year at London landmark like battersea is great. Not only is London home, there aren't many venues we haven't played here so it's nice that this one's unique.'

What format will the concert take?

'We'll have a support act and there will also be speakers who will talk briefly about the two charities benefiting from the show. Musically it'll be the usual Jamiroquai extravaganza - there may be some surprise tracks - for example we do love throwing in the odd cover version in the out sets. You'll have to wait and see!'

Finally, what do you think are the distinguishing features of a Jamiroquai fan?

'They can be from anywhere, do anything but they've got all tha funk!'

JK Interview #22 | Music Monitor

November 4th 1997

"Jason Kay: Soul Man" By Adam Jackson

"Jason Kay is not the kind of guy that springs to mind when you think 'Soul Man.' Jason Kay is a twenty-something British kid in a funny hat. But Jason (JK to his pals), as leader and creator of Jamiroquai, is also the newest kid to bring England's long history of blue-eyed soul to our shores."

Jason Kay is not the kind of guy that springs to mind when you think "Soul Man." Jason Kay is a twenty-something British kid in a funny hat. But Jason (JK to his pals), as leader and creator of Jamiroquai, is also the newest kid to bring England's long history of blue-eyed soul to our shores. What makes Jamiroquai unique though, is that instead of being mere imitation, JK and crew have glued their genuine love of Motown soul to '90s club beats, added some international flavor with the likes of a didgeridoo, and sealed the groove with a little acid jazz fusion. And oh, yes, he sings exactly like Stevie Wonder. But over three albums, Emergency on Planet Earth, Return of the Space Cowboy and Travelling Without Moving, he has proved that his voice and style are no schtick; they are his own.

Jamiroquai have been stars in Europe, Asia and elsewhere since their debut in 1993. Their rise to prominence in America has been gradual but consistent with each record and tour. Now that "Virtual Insanity" has landed on national radio, MTV, VH-1 and BET, they plan on spreading their own brand of the funk to every corner of the land that supplied them with their heroes. Philly is certainly known for it's rich history of soul. Appropriately, that's where JK was when he took a break from the band's current tour, to catch us up on where Jamiroquai have travelled and where they're moving next.

This is your second tour of the States this year, right?

Yeah, we did a trip at the start of this year that also incorporated Japan. Then we came back now to just do four dates, but because of the success we're having at the moment we decided to make it a full blown affair. We want to keep the pressure up, because, as you know, it's been three albums now, and I always expected this one to do well. Let's face it, if you don't get it in three tries, you may as well just start giving up.

Still no plans to make it into the South though?

We'll get there dude. August or September, I think.

European festivals all summer long, I guess?
Festivals, yeah, and Le Mans and all sorts of racing events.

Le Mans? What does that have to do with anything? Personal interests?
Fast cars! That's my personal interest.

Well, professionally, you've been quite a star outside of America for several years. Has that made your "sudden" fame in the U.S. easier to handle?

I think so. You have to remember that we've been back here four or five times now and there's been a pleasant build-up. Of course now the shows are bigger and people are very responsive, but we are pretty big in the rest of the world and I'm ready for it. I know this is a big country so when it comes around, it's gonna come bigger than anywhere else. I'm up for it though, because I feel that this album took us to a benchmark or a base line where we can work from. So we can now work without leaving this country out, which is kind of how it was. You know, Japan, Brazil, Europe, great great, great. Then someone would say America and we'd go 'Yeah, well, um... What are we gonna do about that?'

But it helps that this album has songs like "Alright" and "Virtual Insanity" and that the video for "Insanity" is so good and is getting played on MTV. That way we start hearing from Kansas and Dakota and all over. Which is the point, by the way. We don't just want to play for the edges of America. There are so many more places and we wanna go there. Especially the South. Being from England, we need the sunshine.

Business aside, how important is recognition in America for you? It seems that most of your musical inspiration comes from over here.

Well, I think it's important because the people want to hear the music. It seems that, especially in America, you have the R&B/hip-hop thing on one side and the alternative/indie thing on the other. Where's the room for the other stuff? There's loads of other stuff! And people will like it if you give them a chance. Let them decide what they like after hearing the options!

And it's also important because this is the birthplace of the stuff we emulate, if you want to call it that. But people are people, dude. I like playing to people, I don't care where they're from.

And America is important too, inside financial terms, because there are a lot of people and that helps shit move along with the music. The better we do in America, the more instruments I can have on tour. We really should have six brass and three backing vocalists. George Michael's carrying that sort of clout, but he's the only other guy to come out of England doing this sort of stuff.

I saw "Virtual Insanity" on BET last night. I think that says a lot about you filling those gaps between rock and R&B.; You don't see a lot of British guys on BET.

That's wicked, man! We're a multi-cultural band. There are lots of elements in this world that need changing and having lads like us around can help. There's also that prejudice of, 'Ah, they're English,' ya know? Like we can't be for real. I like the underdog thing, though. It's nice to be an outsider. If I was from this country, I wouldn't have the success I've got. In terms of me doing this kind of music, being a white guy, the record companies would have said, 'Sure kid.'

But now the record label guys could look around England and the world and see that you can succeed with a little support.

Yeah, most people here think we've got one album out. And I've been pushing for this break, because you see people's reactions when they come to the shows. And they've been really wicked shows this time. They see the live show and their eyes just go, 'Now I know what Jamiroquai's about.' You gotta see us live. You must! We're coming!

Tell me how you respond to people calling you retro.

Well, my answer is that you can't copy the past. You can't! Our stuff is never really gonna sound like the '70s. We're never gonna release a record and sound like Earth, Wind & Fire. It doesn't work like that! Remember, they were using different decks back then, valve amps, there was no digital stuff, all analogue, they recorded everything live at once with loads of backing vocals. You can not just sound like someone else. I mean, I know I have the thing with my voice and Stevie Wonder, but that's how I sing! We have three albums now, do you believe me yet? But come on, it's like saying that anyone who creates a piece of classical music is copying Bach or Mozart. Is everyone who picks up an electric guitar copying Hendrix? People get precious about this kind of music because, to be frank, it ain't easy to do! It ain't easy. It's much easier to get four guitars together going 'Wah, Wah, Wah' and that shit than it is to do what we have in the live show. We have the hi-hat sticking out a little and you hear each bass note and you also hear what the horns are doing and a gentle lick on the guitar here and there. The retro argument is just off. Let's get something straight here: People are just saying that because they're jealous they can't do it. [Huge eruption of laughter.] But really, we're only trying to write good songs and there's nothing retro about good songs. Songs are for singing and listening to and giving you pleasure. That's the business we're in.

As for the future, where do you see the sound heading? How far can you take it?

Well, album writing time is coming again and I'm looking forward to it. Have you heard Daft Punk? Have a listen to their track "Around The World" and then try to imagine it with the rawer elements of Sly Stone. I want to get a funk/rock/electro thing. I think we're shifting back to the early '80s sound of synthesized bass notes and hand claps. I can see it forming in my mind, so I'll have a go at it.

Speaking of the electronic scene that America is catching on to in such a big way, have you found yourself lumped in with groups like Prodigy, Orbital and Chemical Brothers? You're all British and all built around rhythm and grooves, but you certainly don't have a lot in common with that crowd, sonically.

No, I don't think that we've ever been lumped in with anyone. Since day one we've been outsiders. When we started it was all Suede and Charlatans and bands in the indie/alternative thing. Then there was the acid-jazz lot. And out of that lot, the only band to slip through the net before acid-jazz dove like the Titanic to the bottom of the sea, to be quite frank, was us. To cross over, you can't just hit people with crazy bits of jazz, you gotta reel them in a little bit to survive. That's what we did on this album; simplify. And then you've got the Orbital and Prodigy, those sort of fellows, who we all know quite well, but we were never on that sort of thing. For us as a band, I think we've played it right by taking our time. By taking a nice, slow approach, people can see what we're about, and then hear the record, and maybe see us live and not just think, 'Oh, great, the Next Big Thing.' 'The Next Big Thing' never really is you know. Smug as it sounds though, I'd laugh my bloody socks off if we did really well over here.

Well, being all over MTV and radio is the right way to get it going. Tell me about your role as leader of the band. A lot of people here still think your name is Jamiroquai.

Well, I started on my own, did the first single, got the name, made the logo, then put the band together because I thought it was very important to have a band unit. My deal with them is this: I'm calling the shots, I want it to go a certain way. You help me write the stuff, I'll give you publishing and points [money based on sales], because remember, the record label wanted to sign me. I don't feel that's a problem because when something is your baby, you don't want five people trying to control it. It is my baby and I had a good idea and I didn't want it taken away. It's like being the captain of the ship, you don't let the first mate have a go. They're all happy. They get paid and they ain't getting ripped off. It's the way it should be. I suppose I am Jamiroquai, but they are an integral part of what I do. Everybody's happy.

Finally, I know you've always placed an importance on environmental issues, especially on the first two records. Tell me a little more about that.

I am sick and tired of the way we destroy wildlife. I'm sick of how we abuse animals. There's going to be no wildlife

left and then you hear there are five billion people. The governments of the major industrialized nations have got to come together and do something. I don't mean by 2001. Now! We are screwed unless somebody pulls their finger out of their ass and does something drastic. How about we spend less money on bombs, guns and weapons and more on making the world the beautiful garden it could be. There's no reason the natural environment and our habitat can't perfectly mix. I used to screw my head with this all day. It's sickening. I have to lay off it for my own sanity. All I want is a Utopia!

Is that where the music comes in?

Right on! Wicked!

JK Interview #22 | Paper Magazine

November 1997

“Stoned Groove: Jamiroquai’s Jay Kay: A Skater In Emperor’s Pumas”

By Julia Chaplin

JK talks about Jamiroquai's recent string of successes and his finally meeting Stevie Wonder



It's one of the last warm nights of fall, and hundreds of Barneys-dressed rich people are stumbling around the Louis Vuitton party at Rockefeller Center, creasing their knees in a stuporous uptown boogie. The skating rink has been transformed into a sort of Epcot disco, with the luggage czar's insignia in plum and ivory projected onto the towering Art Deco buildings surrounding it. In the middle of it all, beneath a gold-monogrammed "LV" hat, is the cosmic party person himself, Jamiroquai's Jay Kay. At this moment he's getting down onstage with a magnum of Moët, teasing and refilling the flutes of blondes with plunging necklines.

Idolized by vibe tribes of nostalgic Deadheads, gear heads and stoners, the waifish bloke's pop pedigree seems lost on this otherwise discerning crowd. The 28-year-old Brit funkster-both revered and scorned by the masses for styling his vocals after Stevie Wonder and ripping off the jazzy grooves of 70's soul and disco-has sold over 10 million records worldwide. But for all Jay Kay's worldly wiles, he's had a hostile reception in the U.S.-until last March, that is. That's when MTV plugged him as their multicultural poster boy and relentlessly aired his motion-sickness-inducing "Virtual Insanity" video almost as often as those annoying Taco Bell commercials. So when Kay and his crew sauntered offstage at the MTV Video Awards last September with four trophies-dusting critics' darling Beck-rock pundits

clenched their fists, then stared with gaping jaws as sales for Jamiroquai's third album, Travelling Without Moving (Sony), soared.

"I've had a bloody good year, haven't I?" Kay says later in his spoiled Austin Powers drawl while lounging barefoot on the couch in his Manhattan hotel suite. A stream of his band members, sporting dreadlocks, Adidas jogging suits and aero-dynamic club cuts, wade through the thick pot smoke, appealing for spending money and gorging on half-eaten cheeseburger platters. At first I don't even recognize Kay without his silly hat on, but soon I'm hip to what his string of girlfriends-from Winona Ryder to English lingerie model Tamsin Greenhill-already know. He may be short, but he's unmistakably sexy as he leaps over the land mines of shrimp cocktail and tartar sauce, telling jokes and busting freestyle imitations of Grey Poupon snobs and breathy young girls.

"Did you write 'Cosmic Girl' for me?" Kay asks in a high-pitched, psychogroupie tone. "I hate to disappoint you," he replies, "but I wrote it for everyone and for me. You are not the Cosmic Girl, alright?" I ask him about the society girl backstage at Louis Vuitton who nearly tackled him in a drunken attempt to create a photo-op. Kay considers this: "I'll admit that the Louis Vuitton gig was a bit corporate," he says. "But look here..." He disappears, a second later dragging six pieces of new, leather-scented luggage into the room. (There's even a full-sized hat box.) "They paid us a hell of a lot of money for a 45-minute set! And..." He folds his hands smugly on the trunk and says in TV-commercial speak, "Luggage like this makes packing a pleasure."

Ever since Kay graduated from skateboarder punk to full-blown rock star in 1993, when Sony set him up with a lucrative eight-album contract, the press has repeatedly pummeled the soulful vocalist. After the release of Jamiroquai's debut LP, Emergency on Planet Earth, the British music tabloid Melody Maker even held a contest daring housewives to tell the difference between J.K. and Stevie Wonder. And then there was the infamous headline from London's The Evening Standard that seethed, "Exposing a Double Pop Scam. J.K.: young, stupid and white."

But the most irksome constant of Jamiroquai's career has been his half-baked social philosophy, which includes lots and lots of weed, environmentalism and a vague "feed the poor" mantra slapped atop a penchant for things trendy and luxury cars (he'll blab tirelessly about his automotive collection, which includes such exotica as an Aston Martin, a Lamborghini and a Ferrari). The cover of Travelling Without Moving, after all, shows a Ferrari symbol with his trademark "Buffalo Man" logo-or "Medicine Man," as some fans call it-in place of the Ferrari dragon. And despite Curtis Mayfield cautionaries about "useless, twisting new technology," most of his videos are of the Sir Mix Alot car-wax 'n' booty variety. In his video for "Alright," when Kay rolls up in his purple Lamborghini (the one he samples on the album's title track) to party on the dance floor with a bevy of bodacious babes, concerns about seals, whales, rain forests and the revolution are checked at the door.

Still, when I ask about his sci-fi-apocalypse song, "Virtual Insanity," Kay seems momentarily distraught with the state of the world. "Millennium shopping market, millennium Ferris wheel," he expounds. "Why don't they spend money giving people homes and making the place green? If they want to improve the environment, they know how to make cars these days with an electric battery that zips you around town, and when you get on the freeway, you revert back to your...you know..."

"You know what I really hate?" he continues. "Packaging! Unnecessary packaging." Now he's a Beverly Hills 90210 Robin Hood lobbing salt and ketchup packets and plastic knives into the air. The guys in the band giggle and tinker with toy airplanes and bubble guns they copped on a recent FAO Schwarz spree. Kay manically peels open a bar of soap. "Look at all this! Pretty print, keeps the shape, indeed it works! They said at our hotel in San Francisco that they had good-quality shampoo and conditioner and something to wash your body with. I mean, people are tripping out 'cause they have to have their sheets changed everyday. It's bullshit. Bloody bullshit!"

O.K., so the guy's just happy, or stoned, or happily stoned. And why not? He's had a pretty "top" week in New York so far. In addition to the Vuitton heist, Jamiroquai played Saturday Night Live's season premiere, landed several dates on the Rolling Stones tour and Busta Rhymes asked to warm up their sold-out gig at Madison Square Garden's Paramount Theater. (So what if he only rapped for 15 minutes and most of the black kids bailed after his set?) But what really sealed the trip was that Kay, by some divine intervention, got to meet his beaded maker, Stevie Wonder!

The holy union, Kay recalls, took place backstage at MTV during the taping of Babyface's Unplugged session. "I said to him, 'I'm that guy you must keep hearing about; the little white guy who's copying your stuff,'" Kay recalls. "He started humming 'Virtual Insanity' and said, 'No, man, you're doing it.' I says, 'Let me do a cover of "Golden Lady,"' and he said yes! I ran outside and punched the air like 50 times and then sat in the corner in tears." Kay shakes his head. "It was a great day."



Stevie Wonder says that while his style is unmistakable in Kay's songs, he feels flattered, not robbed. "It would be different if Jay said he'd never heard of Stevie Wonder, and I'd say, 'Well, you know, that's some shit!'" Wonder reasons. "But music is something God has given us as a gift that we can all enjoy. If fact, I have a song I never released that I was thinking would be perfect for him."

Jay Kay just may be the world's ultimate couch crasher. A skater in emperor's Pumas, he has a deft skill for being at the right place at the right time—a craft honed perhaps in his formative years, when he was an indentured roadie for his jazz-singer mom, sneaking out of hotels in the middle of the night to evade rent collectors. (Kay has never met his Portuguese father.) During the late 80's, when acid jazz was all the rage in London's clubs, Kay bided his time as a street hustler and agile skateboard lookout for graffiti artists. (Kay says skating is where he got most of his fluid dance moves.) After bombing an audition to be the lead singer of the Brand New Heavies, young Kay started Jamiroquai (a name taken from his love of jamming and the Iroquois Indians). Their first single, "When You Gonna Learn," released on Brit indie Acid Jazz, brought the major labels scrambling.

Miraculously, Jamiroquai managed to survive the acid-jazz crash of the early 90's, when kids traded mellow sounds like the Brand New Heavies, Young Disciples and Guru for the bed-of-nails wails of Nirvana, Soundgarden and Pearl Jam. But somehow the slippery little leprechaun escaped the purge. "They didn't change the music enough to push it through to the public," he says of acid jazz's demise. "Let's face it: if we get too jazzy, we wouldn't get the audience we need."

And Kay is not taking any chances when it comes to success. His "We Are the World" band is so politically correct it hurts. There's a Nigerian bongo player, a white, Dust Brothers-style DJ, a hippie keyboardist and a dreadlocked

didgeridoo player. Even Jamiroquai's music seems to have drifted further into New World Order. On the all-genre-inclusive Travelling Without Moving, there's a drum 'n' bass track, a cruise ship reggae number and a disco song featuring Donna Summer-esque dance loops. In a way, you have to hand it to Kay, seeing as Puff Daddy just raps over samples.

"We're aiming for hits," he says. "Cause a hit is like Earth Wind & Fire, like in the 70's, when people had strings of hits. What we're trying to do is get around to a stage on the fourth album [which they'll start working on in December] where we'll do stuff that's exactly what we want to do and that also makes the record company happy and then everyone is really happy."

Jamiroquai's keyboardist and cosongwriter, Toby Smith, who's sitting next to Kay, seems to vaguely understand how the sell-out implications might fall flat on American ears and attempts a rescue.

"What he means is: We do what we want to do and we're happy. And it makes the record company happy because they've got no choice. Because what we do works for them"

"No, that's not what I mean," Kay's face flashes from exasperated to confused to bored, and then he throws his hands in the air.

"I don't bloody know! I just sing the songs!"

JK Interview #23 | People Magazine

October 27th 1997

"Joining The Gentry" By Steve Dougherty & Kimberly Chrisman

"Jason Kay of Jamiroquai treasures the pleasures of fast cars and a country estate..."



Jason Kay of Jamiroquai treasures the pleasures of fast cars and a country estate...

Having moonwalked off with four statuettes at the MTV Video Music Awards in New York City on Sept. 4, Jason Kay, leader of Britain's latest pop invaders, Jamiroquai, has fallen hard for the U.S. of A. Besides, Kay is a tad fed up with life in London, where his unapologetic love for fast, expensive cars and his penchant for smoking spliffs onstage have been tabloid fodder since his group's debut album topped the British charts in 1993. In the U.S., he believes, "they're more interested in the music." At home, critics are "interested in my hat."

*His signature Dr. Seuss chapeaux "are part of my stage character," concedes Kay, 27, who launched Jamiroquai (pronounced Jam-ear-o-kwai) in 1989. "When I got started, you really had to make your identity clear." The lids may have helped Kay get noticed, but it is the singer's jazz-tinged funk and R&B tunes that flip fans. Jamiroquai's first two albums, 1993's *Emergency on Planet Earth* and the 1994 follow-up *Return of the Space Cowboy*, hit No. 1 in the U.K. Now, Kay and his bandmates -- guitarist Simon Katz, 26, keyboardist Toby Smith, 26, drummer Derrick McKenzie, 33, and bassist Stuart Zender, 23 -- have scored across the Atlantic with their third CD, *Travelling Without Moving*. Aside from winning a quartet of MTV awards, *Travelling* has sold 5 million copies worldwide and is a Top-40 Billboard hit in the U.S. But back home, success brings out the bile in critics who accuse the band of aping American funk. "It's really a load of rubbish," counters Kay. "That's like saying that someone who uses a string quartet is copying Mozart."*



With no formal musical training, Kay says he "learned it all from my mother." Indeed, he was literally raised on the road by his single mum, Karen Kay, a British nightclub singer who hosted her own TV variety show in the '70s. Today, Kay carries a photo in his wallet of the father he has never known. "He was Portuguese, he drove cars very fast, and he played guitar," Kay says. "My mum obviously didn't want me to meet him. I'm sure she had a good reason." He learned when he was a schoolboy that he also had a twin brother, David, who died at 6 weeks. "I think he's out there looking after me," Kay says.



At 16, Kay left home, spending the next few years living in squalid squats and supporting himself with petty thievery and odd jobs packing bean sprouts, selling kilts and delivering pizza. By 1989, Kay,

sleeping "in a disused taxi depot with holes in the roof, no electricity, one candle and a really dirty sleeping bag," decided he'd had enough of London street life. "I could sing, which is always handy," says Kay, who bought a drum machine and began turning out demo tapes. Three years later he was discovered by a Sony talent scout and signed to an eight-CD deal worth \$1.9 million.

For Kay, who says he grew up "in the back of a car," there was no question how he would spend his new wealth. He is the proud owner of a Lamborghini, two Mercedes, two BMWs, three Ferraris, an Aston Martin and a Ducati mini-motorcycle. Better yet, Kay will park his collection in the spacious drive of the 11-bedroom Georgian mansion in Buckinghamshire he recently purchased. "It's not Jay Kay anymore," says bandmate Smith. "It's Lord Kay of Horsenden Manor."

As for the future Lady Kay, the position is open. "I'd really like to settle down," says Kay, who has had a volatile relationship with lingerie designer Tamsin Greenhill, the muse for the love songs on Travelling. "Not just yet," he adds with a wink, "but soon."

JK Interview #24 | First Cut October 1997

"Groove Report: Jamiroquai"

"At the MTV Video Awards everyone was talking about Jamiroquai and their breakthrough video for "Virtual Insanity." But lead vocalist Jason Kay is also getting fans from around the world moving to his old school funk and soul. Backstage at his San Francisco show, he showed us a few moves for this Groove Report."



At the MTV Video Awards everyone was talking about Jamiroquai and their breakthrough video for "Virtual Insanity." But lead vocalist Jason Kay is also getting fans from around the world moving to his old school funk and soul. Backstage at his San Francisco show, he showed us a few moves for this Groove Report.

There's no question Jamiroquai is a funk band. In fact, they say they were born that way.

"Since I was a fetus, I was into funk," says lead singer Jason Kay.

Jamiroquai just may be the most popular funk band of the decade. They swept this year's MTV Music Awards with ten nominations, walking away with four awards.

As Kay states, success has always been a part of the master plan: "I think if you go in with enough conviction and you know what you want. It's when you don't know what you want that people don't give you what you want. I wanted an eight album deal.



Sony gave them that eight-album deal five years ago based only on the success of their independent album. The gamble paid off, and now they're the label's biggest British band since George Michael.

But with fame comes controversy. Critics have called Jamiroquai a Stevie Wonder knock-off.

Kay admits to being influenced, but he doesn't dare compare himself: "At the end of the day, I ain't Stevie Wonder. He's a multi-talented, multi-instrumental geezer, and I'm not; I'm just a plum from Manchester."

It's not always obvious, but Jason Kay has reached rock star fame in England. He's hoping to find the same success in America, and that means a lot of time on the road. "To be honest I walk into my house, I put my bag down, and two days later I'm out again. I mean, I don't even take things out of it," he claims. Too much time on the road can make strange music, and drummer Derrick McKenzie has his own theory on the subject: "I think music is an enormous soup that you can get bits out."



They don't seem like the types to get heavy, but their first albums were filled with angst and introspection. On their third album, it's time to play.

"I felt that I'd gone through such criticism of being a troubadour of social conscience," says Kay. "So, now on this third album I thought, 'Shut it. I'm going to let everybody know what I do after I finish gigging and after I finish working.'"

When he finishes working, Kay spends most of his time driving sports cars. He was eager to show us the latest addition to his collection: a 9640 GDO Ferrari. "I can't wait to drive it," he gushes.

With one platinum album and their newest album nearly gold, it seems like the perfect time for the band to take a break.



Well, not if you have aspirations for greatness, as Kay explains: "What you find is when you're keeping something going for five years now to get it to the level and you can't afford to just stop after every year and say, 'Oh, I'm going to have three months off now.' It doesn't work like that. You start leaving it too long and then people can easily forget about all the work you've done before. It's a pendulum. You've got to keep the thing swinging and going."

**JK Interview #25 | Bikini
August 1997**

"Test Drive: Give Porsche A Chance" By Marvin Jarrett

"When the going gets tough, the tough drive to San Diego in a convertible Porsche. British soul singer Jay Kay of Jamiroquai issues the driving challenge: publisher Marvin Jarrett is up to the task..."



When the going gets tough, the tough drive to San Diego in a convertible Porsche. British soul singer Jay Kay of Jamiroquai issues the driving challenge: publisher Marvin Jarrett is up to the task...

*When the word came down that our usual test drive writer had been busted on a fixing scam down in Miami (something about drugging Jai Lai officials) we weren't sure how to play it. It was Friday. Late in the day. And all our other writers were working their busboy jobs which is exactly what we felt, collectively, they should continue doing. Nonetheless, we had the car, a 911 Porsche Cabriolet-- filled to the brim with hot new CDs. And we had the driver, Jay Kay of Jamiroquai-- deep in the midst of a huge rush of success following the release of *Traveling Without Moving* and more than willing (well, sort of...even though we had to talk to three lawyers and a mail clerk at CAA) to drive to San*

Diego whilst chatting about life, love, and the pursuit of the perfect supermodel girlfriend as dictated (and enabled) by the most fickle of all...success in the three ring circus that is show biz.

In an act of ultimate devotion and sacrifice, Marvin Scott Jarrett, our ex-Florida surf punk publisher, legendary six string strummer, and sometime Shar Pei smuggler, raised his hand and agreed to play first mate on this God-forsaken mission. This Jay Kay guy is hot right now. He's been hot in Europe for a while (two albums previous), but now his star's beginning to shoot across the great plains of this land. And when that happens...the bucks really start to pour in. Times are lean in music right now. Talent is substantially...even leaner. The likes of Jay Kay and his soul happy band known as Jamiroquai are a welcome lump on the horizon. It's not a second coming, but it's absolutely bigger than a Domino's pizza delivery guy. With all of this being said, we will join our story...already in progress somewhere between the shore points of Malibu and La Jolla in sunny Southern California...

Bikini: *So you have nine cars yourself?*

Jay Kay: *I got an Aston, a Lamborghini, three Ferraris, two Mercedes, two BMWs...nine.*

Bikini: *What is that? Like a million pounds worth of cars?*

J: *I suppose...it's about 650 or 700 grand.*

Bikini: *Do you consider them more of an investment or a hobby?*

J: *I consider them investments if you choose the right cars and hold on to them long enough. You gotta pick the rare stuff, or classic stuff...stuff that will always be worth money. Once they bring out the new 355, which they'll do next year, that other one is gonna be a classic, just like a Dino was: a classic, mid-engine Ferrari, great handling, power, everything...*

Bikini: *I was thinking of getting one of those convertibles. Do you think that would be a good one if that was pretty much the only car you drove around?*

J: *Oh yeah, there's never a problem with them, as long as you get them serviced, and the more they get used the better.*

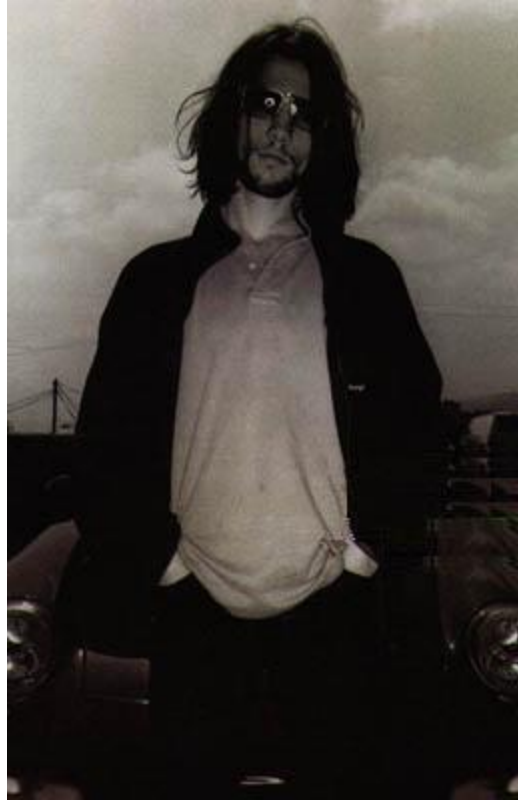
Bikini: *I'd just drive back and forth to work, which is about ten miles...*

J: *Yeah, what I like about them is that it's a great thing to preserve something that's very beautiful, you know. Cars are just boxes now, they're rubbish...like this Toyota Tercel on our right. It will never be anything but a tin box that goes from A to B. Some people want to go from A to B, some people don't care how they do it, but I do. And I also love speed. Every one of my cars has a different personality, the old Merc just rolls along, the Diablo is a complete and utter beast.*

Now Marvin rolls down his window and whips a bottle of Jones Soda at a stop sign. The bottle shatters and Jay Kay claps like a drunken chimpanzee. They notice Peterson's car museum on the right.

Bikini: *That's a big ol' car museum. We should've gone there.*

J: *Oh shit! It's the 50th anniversary this year, man. There'll be some fat shit in there, I tell you-- the best Ferraris are in California. This is where all the early '50s cars, the really beautiful body Ferraris, were. When all the film stars in the '50s had them, particularly at the end, y'know, '55, '56, '57...*



Bikini: Plus your car stays pretty well preserved over here.

J: Well, that's the reason. You see old BMW's, like that Volvo, it's a '71, that Volvo there. Look at this Didge Aspen, just look at that! You know it handles like a rhino with arthritis. Like a Port-A-Loo on wheels.

Bikini: Do you ever write songs in your car?

J: I do a lot of humming and grooving, but as the cars get faster and faster I tend do less and less humming and grooving and more just sheer concentration.

Bikini: What kind of music do you listen to?

J: Oh, I'm a big fan of anything: '60s, '70s, Isley Brothers, Earth, Wind, & Fire, and all of those...so much different stuff really. Classical stuff. I like bits of rock, now and again. But the main influences are definitely the jazz-funk era.

Bikini: Do you listen to many contemporary British bands?

J: I'm not a big fan of contemporary. I'll tell you who I do like at the moment, I like that Daft Punk stuff, I think that's pretty good. That disco edge.

Bikini: What about stuff like The Prodigy or The Chemical Brothers?

J: Oh yeah, I'm into that. I like The Prodigy actually. I caught a couple of gigs...

Jay Kay pops the clutch, but not before missing no less than three gears. The clutch makes a farting/dying noise not unlike a stunt plane heading down into a packed grandstand. Total destruction. The car will never shift the same again.

J: *It's kind of strange, these clutches, aren't they? I had the 911 before. It's a little bit out and then boom. Just let it all out.*

Bikini: *You ever get shit from people over there 'cause, you know, you're pretty up front with the amount of wealth you've accumulated?*

J: *I don't think I'm too up front. I know people who are a lot more up front than I am. I think at the end of the day...you can't just be a slave to what other people want you to be.*

Bikini: *Exactly.*

J: *The trouble with us in England is that we're very scared of other people's success. People want to deny you the trappings of success, and, you know, I don't think it's successful just to have a lot of cars. It happens to be my hobby. I put my money into something that, in years to come, I can always get my money back from...I mean, you can see I'm a scruffy bastard...it's not like it's all some kind of lifestyle thing. I just enjoy speed and I enjoy things that are beautiful and I think if you're gonna have a car, if you can afford to, have something that's quality. Have something that's nice. Have something that gives other people a thrill. I mean when kids see that Lamborghini, they freak. You just don't see that shit on the road, you know? Not even here, really.*

Bikini: *Nah, the Lamborghini's a pretty rare vehicle here.*

J: *Sure, I care about all the things I sing about. I got to the point where I spend so much time thinking about it, I become a depressing moron really. Things aren't black or white, they just aren't one thing or the other. But I don't think people are too worried about it, really.*

Bikini: *Hey man, I think that you deserve it. I'm with you. I just know that your country is very depressed economically and, you know what I mean...say the guys in Oasis, I think they'll try and play it down a bit more. But I think it's like what you said about that guy whose car was a fake Ferrari...*

J: *If you can't afford the real thing, don't bother.*

Bikini: *He has the right to go out and earn the money to buy the real thing.*

J: *Sure, exactly, some people would love to have that. Right, we're not all singers that get paid money. Yeah, well you still have to work to get it. It's no different from anything else. It's just that the business itself happens to pay a lot of money in a big chunk. And some people get annoyed 'cause they haven't got it, but you know, my angle is that five years ago I had nothing. Absolutely nothing. I had no home. No job. I was selling blocks of hashish and I was up shit creek with a broken paddle. And so I worked for it, and I'm not scared to spend the money.*

Bikini: *Exactly.*

J: *The album is, like, *Traveling Without Moving*. I realized that people would bring this question up of cars, asking, "What are we gonna do in the future for transport?" because...really by now we should have cars that hover. We should be traveling without moving. We should just be zipping along. Using the earth's magnetic forces or superconductors or whatever.*

Bikini: *Have you tried those new electric cars?*

J: *No, but the guy who runs my company has one. I'll get one when they bring them out in England.*

Bikini: *I've seen a few of these electric cars around here. It only goes so many miles. You have to power the battery. Kind of a hassle.*

J: *But it's always the same. People will get used to it. You've got to remember, though: Cars are people's freedom.*

Bikini: *That's true.*

J: *We live in a world where every bloody freedom is taken away from us. We're not entirely free to do what we want. Cars are a way to get away and express ourselves. The vehicle itself has helped us to explore a million different parts of the world and the moon as well.*

Bikini: *Where do you put all your cars? You have a garage that keeps nine cars?*

J: *No, I've got them stored in various parts of London.*

Bikini: *Are you into any of those American classic cars?*

J: *Not really. I'm into the '66 split screen Stingray Corvette. The hardtop. It's a nice looking car. Pretty shape. Relatively rare. Old GTO's... '60s... muscle cars. But you know... not really. The Shelby Mustang...*

Bikini: *You think the Europeans make the best cars?*

J: *I do, without a shadow of a doubt.*

Bikini: *Who produced your record?*

J: *Myself and the engineer. I don't do the button pressing, I let him do that. But when it comes to arrangements, I do all that. The feel of it is in my hands.*

Bikini: *Do you have any formal music training?*

J: *No, not in any way. I can't play a note of anything. Well, I can fiddle around on a keyboard, you know. At some stage, when I get a bloody chance, I'd like to get on with learning some flute. Which I seem to have a quite a natural thing for, but it's the time factor.*

Bikini: *So is America very important for you?*

J: *Yeah, very important...shit, you're doing well everywhere else in the world, but here you're thinking, why not? But it's gettin' good, I'm encouraged. I knew this album would be decent enough for people to take notice. At first it was like a rock in a wind tunnel, but now the wind tunnel's going the other way. We've gone gold here which is pretty fuckin' good. We're a million in England, we got half that here.*

Bikini: *I don't know what it is about America but I think once a record reaches a certain point, it takes on a life of its own. I don't know what explains it, but I think you guys are poised to make that happen over here.*

J: *And what happens is the sort of people you need to start coming to your shows, finally come...over and over. Like Mick Jagger...*

Bikini: *That's cool.*

J: I don't think you really get the full picture until you see us play a live show. You get what ya pay for.

Bikini: Did you grow up in London?

J: I grew up all around the country. My mom's a singer, so I followed her around the country. Moved to London when I was about 13 or 14. This next album we have to really take to that next level. Of realizing where you're going right and where you're going wrong. People kept telling me how to break in over here and I kept saying, "Listen man, the climate is changing in America. Young people are changing. The radio's changing." People are sick of the two-sided thing here: rock and grunge. Hip-hop and soul. People are sick of it, that's why they like us.

Bikini: So do you think people in London are pretty cynical?

J: Yeah. I get so sick of them and I get so sick of the journalists there I really have to fuck them off. "Sorry. See ya." They're just bitter 'cause they wanted to sing. That's what it is, really.



The publisher, smelling a piece of hot gossip, nudges the successful musician to go further. To really let it out. Start doing some first class slagging.

Bikini: Tell me more.

J: One particular guy...some sub-editor for The Face...he tore into me partly 'cause I came into the room raging about some article that had been written about me. He starts going into me about being a white man doing black man's music and I say, "Funny 'cause I've never seen a black man using the Queen's English like you're doing." Really gave me a hard time. Turned out it was his brother doing the interview in the other magazine. Tried to give me a 50 question

jazz test. It's like, "Look, lad, I like music but I can't tell you what label it's on. That's not how I look at music." I just like a tune and that's it.

Bikini: *Okay, we've done cars, we've done music. What about girls?*

J: *What about 'em?*

Bikini: *You tell me, man. Are you seeing someone right now?*

J: *You could say that, yeah, sort of...ummm, well...she's a model...*

Bikini: *Does she ever come over with you?*

J: *She's over in NYC at the moment. Girlfriends can give you hassles. They think we're jsut hanging out all the time. It's like now, we're working. (In an accent) Your oil pressure is extraordinarily low right now.*

Bikini: *Is it?*

J: *No, you're fine.*

Bikini: *You know more about this car than I do. You hate it, don't you?*

J: *No, I don't hate it.*

Bikini: *You respect it?*

J: *I respect it a great deal. It's a great car. Don't get me wrong.*

Bikini: *Back at the photo shoot, you seemed a little upset that were being shot in a Porsche.*

J: *I was only kidding. Hey, coulda been a Toyota Tercel. Or that Maxima. I have to say I'm starting to get a little itch for this car now.*

Bikini: *Funny little car. You should get one. There's a new model coming out.*

J: *They call this a 993, don't they?*

Bikini: *Yeah, basically it's a 911 Cabriolet.*

J: *How far is it down to San Diego?*

Bikini: *Maybe another hour to an hour and a half. I gotta stop and go to the bathroom. I'll tell you what's fuckin' amazing is this new Primal Scream record.*

J: *Haven't they finished it yet, I thought they did some last gig or something?*

Bikini: *This is the new album. It comes out in July. Guy who runs the record company showed me the video the other day. It's directed by Irvine Welsh, the guy who wrote Trainspotting. And it's got Kate Moss in it.*

J: Oh, it's got Kate Moss in it. Wouldn't be so good if it didn't have Kate Moss in it. Sexy young thing she is...this is the John Wayne airport, you gotta be joking, right? Jesus, look at the colonization of this place. It's unbelievable. It just goes on and on. Ride share? Does that mean you can sort of have your friend's wife?

Bikini: Look at this McDonald's, biggest one I've ever seen in my life.

J: This is what people do in California. Everybody's here. Forget the Mondrian.

Bikini: There's a bowling alley. I'm just gonna run in there and go to the bathroom.

J: See you in San Diego, all right?

Bikini: And you didn't want to drive the car.

J: I'm kinda changing my mind. Slowly but surely...

Everyone goes in to take a leak. Overcome by exhaustion. And boredom. They steal a case of Camels. And two six packs of Gatorade. Light a match. Drop it in the garbage can and split. Once back in the car, they light up ciggys and start lobbing empties at hippie hitchhikers.

Bikini: Have you seen Austin Powers?

J: What was that?

Bikini: That movie...Austin Powers.

J: What the fuck is this? It's like fuckin' Scotland.

Bikini: Just some rolling hills. So you take your cars out in the race track, right?

J: I don't really get a smuch time as I would like to. That's something I'd like to start more this year really. We did music for the Formula One tunes.

Bikini: So what does that mean? You did the theme song for it?

J: Yeah, it was the same for 20 years and we did the new one. (pause) What the fuck am I doing here?

Bikini: I don't know what you're doing, but I hope you're doing the right thing. You want to go 5 South.

Jay Kay slams on the brakes and the Porsche does a series of quick 360's. In the process they take out a nun holding a "Save the Whales" sign. They stop. Check her habot for spare change...and then speed away...

J: It's a good idea to carpool.

Bikini: Yeah.

J: Any earthquakes lately?

Bikini: There was a little one a couple of weeks ago, like a four, just a little jolt. Have you ever been in one?

J: I've been in two, in fact, in Tokyo.

Bikini: Really?

J: One of the was the night that...it was the big one, I think.

Bikini: Did it scare you?

J: Yeah, it did. I was naked and on the top floor, trying to work my new video camera. What do you do? Put clothes on? Run upstairs? Or do I video this event?

Bikini: What did you do?

J: I put the camera down and continued to stand naked..

Bikini: It kinda makes you do that, it's like, what are you gonna do?

J: Yeah...The thought of me running down the stairs in my underpants is an uncomfortable thing.

Having said that, Jay Kay tosses an empty box of HoHo's out the window. Lights a fresh Marlboro. And peels away..

JK Interview #26 | News Of The World

July 13th 1997

“Why I’m A Mummy’s Boy” By Kate Thompson

"At 27, Jamiroquai's Jason Kay, son of Seventies jazz star Karen Kay, is living life in the fast lane - if his tales of trips down the M4 in his Lamborghini are to be believed. Kate Thornton discovers that he talks as fast as he drives..."

At 27, Jamiroquai's Jason Kay, son of Seventies jazz star Karen Kay, is living life in the fast lane - if his tales of trips down the M4 in his Lamborghini are to be believed. Kate Thornton discovers that he talks as fast as he drives.....

You travelled the world with your mother as a child. Was it a happy time?

"Definitely, though not conventional. I was born in Manchester, an identical twin, but my brother died when he was six weeks old. It broke my poor mum's heart. My mum worked her butt off to give me what she could. She should have had the success I've got. When I was just a few months old, we went off to Nigeria and Las Vegas. It's always been just me and my mum in this game."

Was there enough money around in those days?

"I remember being woken in the middle of the night by my mum sayingm 'Come on, we've got to to go,' and we'd tiptoe out of town because she couldn't afford to pay the rent. Raising a child alone isn't cheap or easy."



Has your mum always been supportive of your career?

"Yes, she was so calm and reassuring saying, 'Go and get 'em, show them what you can do.' I couldn't have asked for more from her. When I left school, I bummed around so much that my mum kicked me out of home, in the hop it would motivate me to do something with my life. I understand why she did it because I was spiralling into criminal activity. It was for my own good."

You've never met your Portuguese father. Are you tempted to track him down?

"Of course, I've got to find him. All I have is one picture of him."

You have a Lamborghini, two Ferraris, three BMWs, an Aston Martin and a Mercedes - why so many cars?

"I sat in cars all my life as a child. That's why I love them. We were always going somewhere on the motorway. To drive fast is all I've wanted from the age of three. When I lost my licence last year because of speeding, it was terrible - but I got it back in March."

What are your plans for the future?

"I want a place in the country with a studio, and fields where I can keep chickens and goats. I'd really enjoy the simple life. I just want to earn a healthy living so that later I can travel the world and see rhinos before they're all gone."

JK Interview #27 | Rocktropolis

April 24th 1997

"Jason Kay Discusses Jamiroquai's Rise" By Mark Marone

"Band Records Song For James Bond Film"

*Jason Kay, founder and leader of the British six-piece pop/dance ensemble Jamiroquai, says he's "warming to the idea" of being embraced by modern rock fans in America. Though already an international success story, Jamiroquai has mostly attracted an underground club following here, albeit one that's bulging at the seams. But the recent increased radio and video play of the song "Virtual Insanity" from their third album *Traveling Without Moving* could change that. "I think it's exciting because you're starting from the bottom again," says the former club-going skater whose silky-sweet soulful voice dominates the band's sound. "And I kind of like that, in a way."*

There has been talk of the Dust Brothers remixing "Virtual Insanity," and of the Red Hot Chili Peppers' Dave Navarro and Chad Smith working on "Alright."

Like Stevie Wonder, Sly & the Family Stone, and Prince before, Jamiroquai's melting pot of musical influences has garnered them a similarly diverse mix of fans that extends beyond its initial club/R&B appeal. "Somebody said to me after the L.A. show they've never seen so many types of kids," says the energetic 27-year-old singer (who is white). "But this is what we stand for; we're a multi-cultural, multi-racial band."

Kay also stands to hear the inevitable Wonder vocal comparisons. "Well, that's a really flattering compliment, but come on, let's get real. Stevie Wonder's in a different class, in every way."

*Jamiroquai are currently touring the U.K. and recording a track for the new James Bond film, and will return to the U.S. in May for their second visit this year. As if that's not enough, Kay is already buzzing with ideas for a follow-up to *Traveling Without Moving*. "I am definitely heading out on more of a funk/rock tip for the next album," he says.*

However much his albums connect, Kay believes the essence of Jamiroquai is only partially uncovered on disc. "People often listen to the records and say 'Yeah? Hmmm? Okay,'" he says. "Then they watch us play live and I think the whole picture comes together because there is a raw energy in our live show. There is an aggression."

JK Interview #28 | Arena Homme Spring/Summer 1997

"JK Is For Jamiroquai" By Tony Farsides

"He came back from the backlash and, just like Sinatra, he did it his way. Jay Kay is a twentysomething millionaire with a head full of winning pop tunes, a garage full of dream cars and a wardrobe stacked with dodgy hats. But how did he rise above the critical thrashing and the snooping tabloids to sell eight million albums? Tony Farsides puts on his driving gloves and catches up with the man."



He came back from the backlash and, just like Sinatra, he did it his way. Jay Kay is a twentysomething millionaire with a head full of winning pop tunes, a garage full of dream cars and a wardrobe stacked with dodgy hats. But how did he rise above the critical thrashing and the snooping tabloids to sell eight million albums? Tony Farsides puts on his driving gloves and catches up with the man.

Jamiroquai are fighting against the clock, locked now in an adrenalin-fuelled race against time. Outside their studio, it's a windy Sunday evening, another strange February day of gales, although the sonic squall inside puts even this in its place. Once more the group begin playing the short burst of menacing music they've been honing, never letting the fact that they have just a few pressured hours left distract their concentration.

In the corridor behind the control room, however, there is plotting afoot. Jay Kay's manager and press officer are hatching plans, discussing various options for getting the singer to an Homme Plus photo shoot the next morning. "You know they're not going to finish here till God knows when, so Jay's just going to want to sleep tomorrow," says manager Kevin Simpson. "He'll unplug his phone and turn off his answer machine. Now I've told Cass not to bother ringing him at all but just to go round there at eleven. Get in, get him up, get him in the shower and hopefully we'll have him there for, say, twelve. It's our best bet, isn't it?" Just as visions of a bleary-eyed Jay Kay being thrust into a shower like some B-movie drunk rear in everyone's heads, the man himself appears fleetingly in the corridor. Although obviously tired, Jay is nonetheless smartly turned out tonight: his hair is tied back and he's wearing a pair of slightly flared beige needle cords, chisel-toed black suede shoes and a red fleece over a crisp shirt. He shoots a winner's smile before disappearing into a sound booth with keyboard player and co-songwriter 'l'oby Smith, oblivious to the military operation now being planned around his morning's washing arrangements. He will remain so, no doubt, until the power shower hits his face at 11.05am.

This Sunday in February was originally pencilled in as that rarest of commodities: a Jamiroquai day off. Yet here the band are, energetically working over and over the same dramatic 15-second burst of sound. Sparse as it is, this 15-second snatch is really very important to Jay; indeed, for the tabloids' favourite funking Romeo, this is one snatch that will surely fulfil an adolescent fantasy. For this piece of Jamiroquai music is destined to be to the new millennium what Fleetwood Mac's "The Chain" dong, der-der-dong, der-der-der-der-der-dong, was to the last quarter of the twentieth century. Yes, the music Jamiroquai are frantically finishing is to be used by ITV as the theme for their Formula One motor racing coverage.

In all of our working lives, there is pressure and then there is pressure. As a lifelong sports car fanatic, Jay understands the full implications of his band's latest achievement. No longer will eight-year-old boys up and down the country be introduced to the wonders of Ferrari and Lotus and McLaren with the measured roar of engine and the less-measured babble of Murray Walker trilling over old Fleetwood Mac. Oh no.

"We fought like absolute dogs to do this," says Jay. "We've been up against everything, especially timewise. Because when you get to the stage we're at now, there's soooo many things that you say no to. And you say no for a reason... you hope that something better will come along. But then this, on top of the whole Ferrari thing for the album. God, it's just so good." And for once he's almost speechless.

For Jay Kay there is a natural link between his twin loves of motor sport and music. "It might sound clichéd, but music and cars have always gone together," he explains. "People in this industry need an outlet. Because when you're making music doing exactly what you want to do then what else can you do after that? You can't just go off and take a break in the hills and wash your face in springs all that crap. You have to turn to that adrenalin rush, which is the next best thing to being on stage. Hooking up third in a Diablo and tickling the brakes as you come into that little blind left-hander with the five tractors and someone's combine harvester on the other side..." Jay Kay is simultaneously grinning like an eight year old and babbling just like Murray Walker.

There have been fears, though, that this whole Jay "sportscar" Kay thing might be getting out of hand. The key evidence, m'lud, being that video for the hit record, "Cosmic Girl". A video which one Music Week critic was moved to describe as "little more than a glorified car commercial."

"Cosmic Girl" had the dubious fortune of following up the Brit Award-nominated video for the single "Virtual Insanity" - the song that spelt Jay's triumphant (not to say disco-tastic) return to Europe's top tens. A single-shot piece, the "Virtual" video had shown Jay singing and dancing in a room where the floor, walls and furniture are moving simultaneously. If the fans loved it, the music industry went into near-spasms of appreciation. "I don't think that video would have worked as well with any other artist except Jay," believes its director Jonathan Glaister. "His movement is unique. Even if Michael Jackson had done it, it wouldn't have been as good." So where did the king of funky choreography go next? He celebrated his leap into a whole new stratosphere of international success by going out for an exotic sin in his purple Lamborghini Diablo. And filming it.

"I did stop and think, 'Will people get this or will they think he's gone completely up his own arse together with his motor?'" says Jay. "But it was important that people see that I'm into it, that I am a bit of an action fan. The public need to understand that I don't want to do videos all the time where I'm just mincing around in black and white. Everybody has a passion, and it's nice to share it with people."



Sure enough, flawed as it was, the punters loved the "Cosmic Girl" car video. They liked the fact that the Lamborghini wasn't some prop but was one of Jay's own. "My Other Car's A Ferrari" say those back-window stickers only this time it wasn't just a crap gag bought at Halfords. The British public actually liked the fact that Jay Kay now had a garage full of rare and expensive cars, and that he was out enjoying them too. Sure, a few media types started on about the contradiction between all these cars and Jamiroquai's well touted environmental concerns, but as far as the average punter was concerned it's a thumbs up and a big shout of "go on my son!" to the West London lad.

Jamiroquai are currently riding a remarkable wave of popularity. The punters love Jay Kay. The trendies and "opinion formers" have come back round to him. And he's selling both singles and albums like nobody's business.

In little over five months, Jamiroquai's latest album Travelling Without Moving sold over four million copies worldwide, a million of those in the UK alone. This easily outstripped the performance of the group's previous two multi-platinum albums, Emergency On Planet Earth (1993) and Return Of the Space Cowboy (1994). Other British pop acts might claim to be "big in Japan", but none of them are big in Japan like Jamiroquai have become. Travelling Without Moving has become the biggest-selling Japanese album ever by a non-Japanese artist, with one million sales.

But it hasn't been all champagne and award ceremonies for Jay Kay and his boys. Beyond the critical backlash that struck the band after their initial success, a more real crisis occurred during 1994 when the band were finishing their second album.

"Most of it was self-induced," sighs Jay now, almost wincing at the memory. The problems, he claims, were the ones that overnight success inevitably brings: demands from the outside compounding all the realignments on the inside.

"You do get catapulted into things. By the time of the second LP, it was like we're doing this and this and this. You're still testing the water and you're still trying to assert yourself, but meanwhile everybody's trying to niggle in on you."

Added to this the band were exhausted, finding the recording process a real struggle. "We were convincing ourselves things were fine when they obviously weren't. We had a new drummer and were going into a big studio without having done a lot of the groundwork. We were just panicking," reflects Jay.

To this extent it is only with the latest album that Jay says he's become genuinely happy with the records the group is producing. "I wanted it to be that this third LP kicked in and set the precedents for the ones to come. This would be the baseline to show we're perfectly capable of making decent music and now it's a question of taking it even further. My mission is still to bring back funk and disco. To make that music great again."

How close Jamiroquai are to that goal was brought into focus by a recent encounter with Maurice White, the leader of the legendary Seventies funk supergroup Earth, Wind & Fire: exactly the sort of razor-sharp musical machine that Jay admits to dreaming of. Having seen a recent Jamiroquai show in LA, White was sufficiently impressed to ask to meet the overawed Brits. "There was talk of us doing tracks for him, so we met him and Maurice says: 'You guys, you're brilliant!' And I was like [adopts meek and slightly embarrassed tone], 'Well, we're only trying to do what you do, actually,'" Jay laughs.

Another indicator of a shift on to a new level of success has, however, been less welcome in the Kay house. Over the last year Jay has had the dubious pleasure of becoming confirmed tabloid fodder. Starting off innocuously enough with pop page titbits about his collection of cars, the papers soon zeroed in on his relationship with model Tamsin Greenhill. The Daily Star ran a spectacularly misinformed two-page spread linking Jay to a number of other girls such as Radio One DJ Lisa L'Anson and the Sunday Times' favourites Tamara Beckwith and Tara Palmer Tomkinson (who was to gasp: "I've never even met him!"). Star then followed with two further gems "confirming" that Jay and Tamsin had definitely split for good. They hadn't. This all stemmed from a story in the News Of The World earlier in the year where it was (more plausibly) reported that the police had been called to Jay's west London mews house after neighbours had complained about the noise of the couple rowing.

"Look, it would worry me more if they started getting things right," comments Jay, refusing to comment further on the topic of the tabloid tales.



This press intrusion reached new heights the day after the band's most recent London appearance, when Jamiroquai's press officer received a call to confirm that reporters had seen Jay walking a dog that night. Innocuous enough, but the point was someone was out there watching everything. When the Lamborghini was crashed by Jay's driver (the singer wasn't even around at the time), the rumour mill switched up another gear.

But if the tabloid exposure is somewhat inevitable, the attitude of other sections of the popular press is more puzzling. For all their popularity, Jamiroquai still don't receive the sort of blind press praise routinely doled out to the likes of The Prodigy and Blur and Björk by the music writers at both the VME or the self-styled hipper broadsheets. As recently as September, the Guardian ran a gig review under the tired title of "Prat In The Hat."

What exactly is the deal here? From Radio One to The Face, Jamiroquai are back in favour. British clubland, meanwhile, has taken to some of their recent dancefloor remixes like a pill-popping duck to water. The Dave Morales remix of "Space Cowboy" was an Ibiza anthem as long ago as 1995. So why the party poopers?

"I think Jamiroquai are one of these problem groups for the more serious press because what they both represent and believe in aren't necessarily things that journalists like. Or understand," believes Paul Gorman, contributing editor at Music Week.

"Jay obviously has a mouth on him, but having said that, it is still quite amazing if you look back just how negative the press have been."

"Jay does have this very populist way," comments Muff Winwood, managing director of Jamiroquai's record label, SONY S2, and a veteran of the music business. "He'll be talking to people and then he jumps in a Ferrari and drives off and they think it's all part of the thing. The public think it's cheeky. Some of the press resent all that."

The other lingering press complaint, of course, is the old "white boy sings the blues" chestnut. Ironically, while veteran black soulsters from Maurice White to Diana Ross have been unstinting in their praise for Jamiroquai, the group are in an ambivalent situation at home with regards to their black audience. Much of this dates back to early press coverage criticising Jay for aping and exploiting black musical styles without having to suffer the racism that black artists face in the music industry.

Radio One's R&B jock, Trevor Nelson, feels the group do have a sizeable black fan-base but that much of it is hidden. "I think there's a lot of closet black Jamiroquai fans out there," he says. "I went around with 'Virtual Insanity' in my record box and I didn't play it because of that whole vibe. Then one night I was playing The Coliseum on a Sunday night, which is like the darkest most heavy night in London. So I was feeling brave and I decided to play it. You know the place went absolutely ballistic, they loved it. The truth is that people love him, but because the likes of Choice FM might not give the music their seal of approval there's still this vibe."

In America too, Jamiroquai records still suffer from the racial nature of America's radio networks. "The US just doesn't know how to deal with a white artist singing black-sounding music," says Muff Winwood. "The black radio stations have been scared to play Jamiroquai for commercial rather than musical reasons. They feel they need artists that fit in with the products they're advertising - which are often things like haircare and cosmetics. The white stations won't play it, of course, because they think it's too black."

As a result, Jamiroquai have yet to make a sizeable impression in the States. That notwithstanding, there is a buzz on the US streets now, being backed by an increasing endorsement from American MTV. UK singer Mica Paris attended the group's last LA gig alongside the likes of The Fugees and D'Angelo. "It was the baddest and Jay just kicked it that night. He went on stage, danced up a storm, and the Americans loved it," she says. "He made me really glad to be British."

By eleven o'clock, the Formula One tune is in the proverbial. As the session unwinds Jay is in upbeat mood. Not playing an instrument himself, he has been translating his musical ideas by singing the parts, carrying with him a Dictaphone, to make sure he can catch every idea.

This bite the tiredness he's still animated, a constant ball of energy. "You do stand back, look at yourself sometimes and think, they're right. I'm just off at 150mph in every direction like a chicken. Just some mad nutty chick, man." He clucks in demonstration. "But I need to get all that out - I need to channel it. If I didn't I think it would reverse itself and I'd go in on myself and become apathetic. I need to channel that thing it's an element of what my character is.



"I see America right now as something to get my teeth into." Jay is now adopting the voice of a goofy, pastoral vicar. "We all, I think, want to have a good old munch at something and it's well, it's the final frontier, isn't it?"

A few days later I attend one of Jamiroquai's stranger concert appearances at north London's Alexandra Palace. The occasion is a lavish private party thrown by McClaren Mercedes to launch the new livery (that's a paint job in everyday English) for this season's McClaren Mercedes Formula One car.

The 5,000-strong audience consists of 1,000 racing groupies, 2,000 very male motoring correspondents and sales reps as well as their 2,000 wives, mistresses and girlfriends. For entertainment and at no small expense we are offered both Jamiroquai and Britain's biggest pop phenomenon, The Spice Girls.

Standing in front of me are two thirtysomething couples who have dressed up especially and are obviously enjoying the glitz of the occasion. As The Spice Girls perform, one of the wives starts loudly teasing her husband. "Ere, Geoff, which one is it you fancy?" she says. Geoff sheepishly points to dizzy blonde Emma and the others begin to rib him mercilessly.

By the time Jamiroquai takes the stage, the two couples' merriment is reaching a peak. Other guests have drifted from the building by now, but Geoff is obviously enjoying his first Jamiroquai concert and is watching with woozy yet fixed interest. Finally he turns to his wife. "He's very good, isn't he. Why do you think he wears that bloody stupid hat?"

Yes, that hat still. Perhaps there's a lesson for us all in that big furry blue tifter of Jay Kay's, though. Admittedly, it is a hat that go per cent of the population would not have in their house, let alone on their head. Certainly, it is not a hat that the marketing department of a record company would ever have come up with. No, it's no Fugee hat, or Prodigy hat, or even a Spice one. Ultimately, it's just Jay's old hat - a hat of his own making. He wore it when he was unknown

and played his first live show on the Holloway Road and he's still wearing it now he's a multimillionaire superstar with a few Ferraris.

And if you wanted to sum up Mr Kay's fortunes in a simple sentence, what better way is there? The man's got a hat of his own and, you know, he wears it very well.

**JK Interview #29 | Fresh
April 1997
"Jay Kay's Perfect Night Out"**

JK talks about dating and his best and worst evenings out|

Describe your ideal night out.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder and the longer I've been banned from driving, the more I think about my cars. When my ban expires in three weeks, my perfect night will be driving my Ferrari deep into the country and just leaving everyone and everything behind. That's how I relax and do my thinking and chilling.

Where were you and who were you with on the best night out you ever had?

Ooh, better be careful here! We've just been to LA where we did a show at a place called the House Of Blues. The Fugees, D'Angelo and some of Earth, Wind and Fire turned up, which was nice. We stayed at a hotel called the Mondrian, which has the most amazing bar you've ever seen. I was there with the rest of the band just staring at the movers and shakers slurping their \$300 cocktails. We had shandy, of course.

Who paid?

We did. There's no such thing as a free lunch, especially in America.

How did the evening end?

I tucked Toby, Stuart, Wallace, Derrick and Simon into bed. Then I jumped in and our manager, Kevin, read us The Three Bears. What do you think happened?

Who, either living or dead, would you most like to spend an evening with? Oh, there's loads.

Off the top of my head, I've been reading this book about the SAS by Andy McNab. He wrote Bravo Two Zero about the Gulf War and this one is about his early life growing up in Peckham. I'd just be interested to know a bit more about what it was like surviving in the desert for weeks on end and being tortured when he was captured.

What's the worst night out you've ever had?

It wasn't really a night out, but the time I found out that someone had trashed one of my sports cars was a real downer. This guy looks after my cars at a garage in west London. He was supposed to be driving one to a lorry for transportation to Europe, where I was going to use it in a video. He takes it out of the garage and decides to take his son out for a spin round the block first. He stepped on the gas and nine concrete bollards later, he ground to a halt. When I found out, it was like someone had died. I had to call on my ol' buddy Jack Daniels after that.

What have you said or done that you've most regretted on a date?

I've been the epitome of cool on every date in my life.

**JK Interview #30 | Details Magazine
April 1997**

"Jamiroquai Jamming" By Suzanne McElfresh

A short interview, including JK's "Essential Funk Encyclopedia," a list of his nine favorite R&B records



You sound exactly like Stevie Wonder. What do you think of "I just Called to Say I Love You"?

You can't knock the essential quality of the tune, even if it is soft cheese. But most of his songs still have lovely chords. If you played something he wrote in '95 the way he used to play them in '74, you'd find that it was "mmm-mmm", thank you.

Your mom, Karen Kay, is a singer. Does she like your singing?

Yea, though she knocked it at first. She was a big-band singer, a Lena Horne/ Barbra Streisand type. She used to discourage me. She'd say, "You really don't want this." The stuff she's gone through, being a woman on her own, doing three shows a night in Las Vegas . . . When you're English and twenty-two, Vegas is a tough place. It's just like, God, please get a cop.

Are you a fish-and-chips man?

I'm a fish-and-chicken man, it's healthier.

So you're not one of those crunchy vegans or anything like that?

No. That's a bit extreme. Anyway, it doesn't mean a lot these days, when they spray crap on your carrots. I've been thinking lately about some of the things I want to do, though. I'm really, really tired; I had shingles last year. At some point I'd like to be able to actually sit down and forget Jamiroquai for a couple of months and remember who I am and what it's all about. You know what I mean? I'd like to learn the flute. I'd like to make a concious effort to stop smoking or paint my house or get a dog.

You guys formed in 1990, around the breakthrough of a few other British jazz-funk-soul bands, like the Brand New Heavies and Soul II Soul. Some people said your band was so successful because you're white.

That was very much the argument--why does this white guy get all the publicity? Of course it is black music, and it's Latin music as well. And it's true that a lot of black artists don't get the chance for an eight-album deal, like I have with Sony. But the magazines that said that are the very magazines that wouldn't give those black artists the coverage anyway.

Ever get a speeding ticket?

What? (laughs) At the moment I'm on a six-month ban for speeding.

How fast were you going?

The last time I got caught I was only doing 80 miles an hour. But I got caught in France doing a healthy 145. The policeman radioed ahead and had another one stop me.

So you're a good driver?

I can hold my own.

There's a car shifting gears on the title track of *Traveling Without Moving*. What is it?
That's my Lamborghini --a purple Diablo SE 30, one of only three in the country. I put a mike in the car to record the gear stick.

You have a car thing.
I have eight. They all have their own character and vibe, but the black Ferrari is my all around favorite --the Ferrari 355.

Would you let me drive?
Er, no. Not anymore. Not after someone smashed my Lamborghini. The one on the record is a replacement.

There's definitely a lot of disco on *Traveling*. Is disco still cool?
I love it to death. But all we have in England now is jungle and house. It's rare that you hear any proper disco. But I wanted to have some fun with this album, so things like "Cosmic Girl" are there for kitsch value. It'll do well in the gay clubs, as somebody said to me. But anyway, if you break down house and take it down to high energy --it's all disco in the end.



JASON KAY'S ESSENTIAL FUNK ENCYCLOPEDIA

Nine Hard-To-Find records in the key of R&B;

Marvin Gaye, "I want you" (Tamla, 1976)
Just beautiful. And very natural in terms of vibe and musicality. "After the Dance" is a perfect ballad.

Roy Ayers, "Evolution" (Polydor, 1995)
This two-CD box set by my favorite funky vibes player is filled with rare '70s tracks like "Everybody Loves the Sunshine." Smooth keyboard sound and sassy vocals.

Donald Byrd, "Places and Spaces" (Blue Note, 1975)
I've been influenced by Donald and his funky trumpet for quite some time. Jazz-pop with great synthesizers. This is one of my all-time favorites.

Fatback, "Hot Box" (Disco Classics, 1980)
So delicious. This is one of the best albums of the early '80s: The musical content is amazingly original; so are the vocals and the horn lines. Check out "Backstrokin."

Herbie Hancock, "Headhunters" (Columbia, 1974)
The keyboard sounds are intense and the musicians are brilliant. This is very spacious funk. "Watermelon Man" and "Chameleon"-- what else can you ask for?

Ramsey Lewis, "Sun Goddess" (Columbia, 1974)

Very influential record by an incredible keyboardist. Earth, Wind and Fire played on a few tracks. I especially like "Hot Dawgit."

Bernard Herrmann, "Taxi Driver" (1976)

I've always been a big fan of funky film music. This is one of my favorites. It's got the best sax solo going.

Patrice Rushen, "Straight from the Heart" (Elektra, 1982)

Her voice, particularly on "I Was Tired of Being Alone," has amazed me since the early '80s.

Stevie Wonder, "Innervisions" (Motown, 1973)

Need I say more?

JK Interview #31 | The Chronicle

March 17th 1997

"Jamiroquai: CD, The Concert, The Interview" By Bianca Williams

A brief interview about some of the inspiration behind Travelling

Even though the third album from the British band Jamiroquai continues to use the funk sound as its base, it contains a dash of Latin flavor, reggae grooves and jungle beats. Traveling Without Moving is funkier than the bands previous releases. It contains more memorable choruses, hooks and dance tracks. This album not only speaks volumes musically, but lyrically it calls for the higher self to become aware of the social issues of today.

The sold out Jamiroquai concert at the Riviera Nightclub was the third stop of a five city U.S. promotional tour for its new album, Traveling Without Moving.

Lead singer, Jason Kay danced his way onto the stage with a big black furry hat on his head. He opened the concert with three old tunes that included the title tracks from the band's two previously released albums, Emergency On Planet Earth and Return of The Space Cowboy.

The encore consisted of an old song and the hidden track "Funktion" that appears on the UK version of their latest release. Sandwiched in-between these crowd pleasers were eight tracks off the new release. Much to Jamiroquai's surprise, the audience sang along as they performed the new funkier, catchier tunes.

When the first cords of the racy song Traveling Without Moving were played, a fifteen by twenty-five foot backdrop with a Lamborghini Diablo and buffaloman sign in a snowcapped mountain setting, descended from the ceiling. The backdrop was raised during the encore to display two giant buffaloman symbols outlined on each side of the stage. The appearance of the huge buffaloman symbols produced a roar of approval from the audience.

Throughout the concert Jason talked to the audience, display his sensuous energetic dance moves along with his band leader ability as he conducted the band to slow down or pick up the tempo. While the band performed the instrumental songs that displayed the talenridoo, Jason would sign album covers, t-shirts and pieces of paper for the fans. The one hour and twenty five minute concert was exhilarating. Jamiroquai was overwhelmed by the audience's response to their new material. And the audience was left wanting more of them.

Getting to Jason Kay (the lead singer) backstage was next nearly impossible. People surrounded him constantly. However, eye contact and a smile can always stop any conversation.

The roaming reporter leaned over the bar behind the bodyguard. Jason Kay leaned toward her as their hands touched.

Bianca: Hi, Jason. I'm Bianca.

Jason: Be - an - k...

Bianca: No. Be - an - ca as in Bianca Jagger.

Jason: I know. I had dinner with Mick four weeks ago.

Bianca: On your current release, there are tracks with Latin influences, reggae connotations and jungle beats. Has Jamiroquai decided to make a transition from its funk base to other types of music?

Jason: No. . . because my dad is Portuguese.

Portuguese probably is referring to the Latin influences. Before Jason Kay could respond to why his band added reggae and jungle beats to the new album, someone pulled him away to introduce him to another guest.

Jason willingly obliged the person with his undivided attention. The reporter walked around to look for other members of the band. By the door was Jamiroquai's bassist, Stuart Zender.

Bianca: Hi Stuart. Does Jamiroquai plan to release an instrumental album?

Stuart: I plan to.

Bianca: When are you going into the studio to record.

Stuart: After the tour.

Bianca: When are you guys coming back to Chicago?

Stuart pauses and stares at the reporter.

Stuart: May.

Bianca: At least it will be warmer.

Stuart: What's your name?

Bianca: Bianca.

Stuart: There's this after party. Do you want to come?

Bianca: Sure. Where is it?

Stuart: Hey (some guy comes over). Gives her the address to the party.

Stuart leaves the room. Three hours later when sleep is kicking in at three in the morning, the roaming reporter sits at a table in an underground location. The first Jamiroquai member, Stuart Zender finally makes an appearance. He talks to some people takes off his coat and goes into a room. The reporter puts on her coat to leave but patiently waits for Stuart to come and join the party. When he emerges the reporter walks up to him.

Bianca: Hi.

Stuart: Hi. You made it.

Bianca: Where's the rest of the gang.

Stuart: Sleeping. What I should be doing.

Bianca: Did you like the concert?

Stuart: Yeah. It was great. But, we were tired.

Bianca: What did you like about it?

Stuart: The audience singing along.

Bianca: In the credits of Traveling Without Moving, you thank everyone in Chicago. Why does Chicago and Jamiroquai have a strong bond?

Stuart: Because Chicago likes different music.

Bianca: Jamiroquai is huge in Europe and Japan. However, you're not that popular here. Do you want to be popular in America

Stuart: No. . . No, because we wouldn't be able to hang out.

Bianca: Well, it was nice meeting you Stuart. I have to go. I have to be at work in four hours.

Stuart and the reporter shake hands.

Bianca: Get some sleep.

Stuart: I will. Bye.

The reporter made it home safely. The night with Jamiroquai was worth being deprived of sleep. It's also refreshing to know that the hottest UK funk band would rather hang out in America than win the popularity contest on the record charts.

**JK Interview #32 | Vibe Magazine
March 1997**

"Son Of Soul" By Michael Odell

"Jamiroquai's Jason Kay, England's funkier white boy, is still seeking Stateside success. Will he find it this time?"; a version of the article that appeared in The Guardian in August 1996 (listed below)



Jamiroquai's Jason Kay, England's funkier white boy, is still seeking Stateside success. Will he find it this time?

Jason Kay doesn't carry himself like other R&B players. The first time we meet he's dressed down to the point of vagrancy: old-skool sneakers, battered corduroys, grubby T-shirt, and three day's stubble. In a room full of Sony suits gassing about market share and chart positions, the young urchin millionaire chats about cars and rolls a missile-size spliff.

Not only does Kay not wear the uniform, he doesn't sing from the songbook either. He and his four-piece band Jamiroquai are a quirky accident of British urban culture and, right now, the most successful soul act in the U.K. Travelling Without Moving, their latest set, moves confidently from disco and reggae to funk and jungle.

"I was influenced by hip hop, graffiti, breaking, and the street culture that went with it," says Kay, 27, whose wayward teen years coincided with hip hop's new possibilities of language, style, and music. "There was no plan - it's just that when you're a teenager you choose what you think is most hip, and black culture was it."

In the late '80s, west London groups like the Brand New Heavies and the Young Disciples were already well on their way to bringing the British club vibe to vinyl. After an unsuccessful attempt to install himself as lead singer with the Heavies, Kay recruited his own band: Stuart Zender (bass), Toby Smith (keyboards), Derrick McKenzie (drums), and Wallis Buchanan (didgeridoo). They signed with the tiny independent label Acid Jazz, and while their first single, "When You Gonna Learn," was released without mainstream fanfare in 1992, Kay's soulful falsetto sent a charge through the underground.

Culture critic Lisa Jones once described how the curvature of Mariah Carey's nose became of serious concern upon her debut because everyone wanted to establish cultural ownership. With the release of "When You Gonna Learn" in the U.K., there was a similar rush to locate Jay Jay on the culture radar. Just who was this lad? Kay turned out to be a mouthy, charismatic white brat with appealing boho credentials: his mum was a jazz singer who had reared him single-handedly while gigging across the world, and he has never known his absent Portuguese father.

Immediately, Jay Kay showed music biz acumen. Jamiroqui were linked to the Acid Jazz label and therefore to the faddish, retro style of the same name ("Acid Jazz was the Titanic," Jay laughs now. "A great ride to begin with, but we had to get off before the whole thing went down"). As the label celebrated the success of the debut single, Jay took the band to a higher level, nabbing an eight-album deal with Sony.

*By the time the album *Emergency on Planet Earth* arrived in 1993, Jay's rascally street cool and earnest Green politics were earning him magazine covers everywhere. The band's name, he explained, was a hybrid of the words "Jam" and "Iroquai" from the Indian tribe Iroquois. Environmentalist angst poured from his lips in interview and in song. The signature medicine-man chapeau clinched the image: Jay Kay became "the cat in the hat."*

For some folk, though, the Great White Hope was just getting it too easy. Another (Caucasian) band took the now famous Jamiroquai "cat in the hat" silhouette and plastered it across London with the words "YOUNG STUPID AND WHITE" underneath. There were other murmurings: Jamiroquai's rise coincided with the under-recognition of several talented black British soul singers - Omar, Don E, the Young Disciples. How did this white boy succeed so quickly and easily where they had failed?



Ironically, many black British artists closed ranks around him because he represented amongst the best of the U.K.'s urban music artisans - race be damned. Even so, one British newspaper article claimed Jay Kay was the new Elvis, stealing the soul all over again. Another reported that Jason believed he was better than Stevie Wonder, his all-time hero and an obvious musical reference point. "That really fucked me off...I got stitched up by some real bastards," Kay says. "Stevie Wonder is a hero. He's fucking brilliant, and there's no point in me dreaming I'm ever going to be like him. One journalist

in particular quoted me saying I thought I was like him, which was crap. If he reads the British papers he probably already thinks, 'Who's this cocky little shit who thinks he's me?'

*A groundbreaking first effort, Jamiroquai's **Emergency on Planet Earth** welded everything from funk to eco-angst and end-of-the-millennium uncertainty. The second album, 1994's **The Return of the SPace Cowboy**, included "Manifest Destiny," an unburdening of white guilt over 400 years of black enslavement. But on **Travelling Without Moving**, the temperament has changed. The album's mood is lighter, more throwaway. Jay Kay is tired of being what he calls "the troubadour of social conscience."*

"People say I set myself up to get slagged off, and maybe they're right," Jay admits. "I wrote 'Manifest Destiny' because- let's face it- when I was a youngster, I had no idea about slavery and the things our forefathers did. When you learn how fucking evil and cruel history has been to some people, when you get an idea of how history itself is hijacked by different people, you get a perspective on why the world is like it is."

Most recently, he has been trying to reconcile his environmentalist beliefs (including a commitment to donate 7 percent of merchandising profits to Greenpeace) with his love of sports cars. He currently owns eight, including an Aston Martin, two Ferraris, and a Lamborghini. Last July, he was seen driving his Ferrari through London and found himself snagged up in a mass bicycle demonstration aimed at getting cars banned in the city. Surely a moment of insoluble embarrassment for R&B's new age pamphleteer? Nope.

"I have every sympathy for those demonstrators," he says. "They're right! I shouldn't be able to drive in London. If the British government had any balls, they'd pedestrianize central London. But I'm not going to make it happen - the government can make it happen. I raise my hat to those people. Well done for getting off your arses and doing something."

Jamiroquai hark back to an age of "all-natural" R&B; when soul music was at its finest. And yet, despite their retro music mind-set, Jamiroquai still have the power to move the underground. Last summer, British jungle artist M Beat asked Jay to record on the track "Do U Know Where You're Coming From," and he obliged. The demo tape was duly bootlegged and found its way onto the airwaves of London's KISS-FM.

*"It was like someone had taped me singing in the bath and stuck it out on the airwaves. I was seriously pissed off and embarrassed," says Jay. A lesser soul might have opted for litigation. Instead he went into the studio to rerecord it. The track rocked Jeeps throughout the summer, and became a surprise national hit; it's now included on **Travelling Without Moving**.*

"I have my spiritual moments," says Jay. "But at the same time I can allow myself to be nationalistic and competitive when it comes to the new album. We want to break America, because no British act has done it for ages. We've got something to prove for British soul."

JK Interview #33 | The Source Magazine

February 1997

"Neo-Soul" By Adario Strange

JK is heralded as one of the "live five," with the likes of Erykah Badu and Maxwell; the beginning of America's awakening to Jamiroquai...

*If you know your hip-hop history, you're just as aware as the pioneers that hip-hop music was largely inspired by the raw vocal performances born in the world of Reggae, as well as the smooth grooves brought forth by '70s funk and soul music. Believe it or not, there once was a time when punk rock, salsa, disco and funk were played at a jam (see: **The Roxy, New York City**, over a decade ago) and it*

would have been considered a "hard-core" hip-hop party. It was no surprise to see a young white girl with blue, yellow and red hair, numerous chains and spiked wears, getting her groove on right next to a Cazal-wearin', Kangol-hatted break-boy. Somehow along the path of hip-hop music's growth into a billion dollar industry, we have allowed much of the music to become conservative in its own way. You can try to tell me that Blondie's "Rapture" (an old R&B;/Rock tune by a decidedly un-ghetto, blonde-haired white woman) isn't hip-hop, but having participated in the creation of the culture as a young B-Boy, I know better.

Nowadays, if it doesn't sound like what we are used to on the radio, it simply can't be hip-hop. This kind of thinking has led to the stagnation (via the modification) of the lion's share of the music form. Sure, times change, and often for good reason, but the original eclectic nature of hip-hop music is probably something that shouldn't change. It is with these thoughts in mind that we decided to showcase another side of the Hip-Hop Nation. The soul side. Presented for your review (read: don't sleep!), these individuals represent some of the freshest sounds emanating from the jazz/soul/R&B;/funk vaults of the young music makers of the '90s.

[Blurbs on Erykah Badu, Maxwell, Tony Toni Toné, and Omar.]

JAMIROQUAI: Led by 26-year-old Jay Kay, this band is easily one of the most musical, young non-jazz groups around. Jay kay weaves taunting melodies around the complex rhythms of his instrumentalists in a way that harks back to the disco and funk '70s, but somehow doesn't repeat or rehash the music. It's all fresh. Their debut came in '92 with "Emergency on Planet Earth," and was steeped, like most of his records, in socio-spiritual philosophy. In Europe, the record hit big, deep messages and all. You may not recognize Jay, but trust, he's sold millions. The follow-up, "Return of the Space Cowboy," was no disappointment, even though the critics tried to dis. Now with the release of 1997's "Traveling Without Moving," Jay and his band are looking like they may finally see some more light here in the States. This is the music that heads will be bumpin' in their space hooties in the year 2097. Someone once asked me, "what do they sound like?" I said, imagine Rufus & Chaka Khan reincarnated with a white guy who grew up around spiritual roughnecks singing lead. Yeah, that's pretty much it.

JK Interview #34 | Blah, Blah, Blah January 1997

"This year Jason Kay seems to have had more than his fair share of hits, pits, penalty-points and write-offs. Yet, from travelling around the '70s cabaret circuit with his jazz singer mother to Travelling Without Moving, the man in the hat's world has always revolved around the road and the stage."



Jamiroquai's two tourwagons pull up outside a characterless Holiday Inn in uptown Barcelona. Tonight's show is to be a modest, intimate affair - an audience of merely 2,500 at The Zeleste - but five days ago Jamiroquai were entertaining 12,000 Eurofunkers in Zurich's Hellenstadion.

Jason Kay saunters into reception, looking a million dollars despite his recent bout of shingles, a debilitating virus which attacks the nerve endings, it can blind you, and tends to recur if you don't completely rest. Jamiroquai have already had to reschedule a date in Milan this week so JK could chill, and next week's UK TV appearances on TFI Friday, Later and Top Of The Pops have also hit the crapper.

Jason, though, ain't no quitter. It later transpires that the TV programmes were only knocked back so that he could squeeze some US promotion between his intense European tour and January's dates in Japan, where Jamiroquai have already sold half a million copies of their latest album, Travelling Without Moving. Looking at Jamiroquai's global commitments, the title seems something of a misnomer especially for Jason who seems to have spent his whole life on the road.

"I call it NFA," he says later chilling out over his herbal tea "No Fixed Abode. See, I sat in cars all my life as a child. That's why I love them. On the motorway, going from every gig, gig gig, with road, road, road ahead of me, we were always going somewhere.

"I remember my mum waking me in the middle of the night so we'd skip, tip toe, out of places. It's always been me and my mum in this game." Jason's mother Karen Kay also sang. She used to incessantly tour diminutive clubs the length and breadth of England, performing with jazz bands and ensembles. Appearances on TV shows like Blankety Blank may have helped make the ends meet, but Jason knows she never got her dues. "When I was younger I used to think, 'what am I gonna do to make her proud, get a livng and do what I want to do?' At 13 I was doing a lot of singing and acting, so I could have easily gone to stage school and now be sitting around waiting to make the ultimate British cult film By 17 I started to click into music. I was involved in music with a mate, doing a drum machine thing, when I got the real pangs for it but, to be really honest, I always thought I'd be on a stage.

"Once, toward the end of one of mum's performances, with all these dancers either side of her I ran onstage shouting, 'Mummy, Mummy Mummy' I was only four! Sometimes I'd creep downstairs looking for her, 'cause I'd be alone in the

hotel room. That was the way it was I mean, as an only child, when your mum does what she does, and you follow her around every day, it wasn't like I'd want to sit in an office all day."

Today it's his mother who watches from the wings "I remember her dropping me off at the first gig we did I was so nervous, going, 'what if I can't remember my lyrics,' and she just sat there, going, 'don't be stupid, just get out there and do it' She came down to the Brixton Academy gig the year before last. Blagged her way through the back door halfway through a show that wasn't going so well. Now most people will stick around to meet so and so but she was off before the last number mouthing 'Bye, bye.'"

Come good or bad times, Jay knows blood is thicker than his record contract despite the small print "We were halfway through recording the new album Travelling Without Moving when the record company said, 'we want it more like The Fugees. Like D'Angelo,'" he laughs disparagingly "To be fair a lot of the stuff we've done has been based around that hook, that Fu Gee La, where it almost feels Latin 'Too Young To Die' and 'Stillness In Time' did that. But there we were, four months in and halfway through, and Sony said 'there are no singles' I got really mad. See, I knew that I wanted to utilise more backing vocals on this album, but I've always been a bit scared of backing vocals I'm not the best harmoniser in the world I'm good at harmonising music but not vocals. At that point I only had the guide vocals down and was working on the choruses when they said, 'there are no singles' Can you imagine?! You're sat there working really hard, happy at the way things are going. I'm like, bloody hell just let me do the choruses! And, whaddya know, all of a sudden we've got five singles."

Jason slumps back on the sofa. 'But at the end of the day it's this album that's important It encompasses what we are all, pretty much doing in life, which is travelling without moving, not lust in the literal sense, but also in the way we approach the problems on the planet."

Despite its title Virtual Insanity the first single from the album, spoke ironically of today's reality a world where everything that breathes; nature, animals, humans, is abused, genetically altered or killed A reality where food IS irradiated to remain aesthetically pleasing; where herbivores are so intensively farmed they re forced to become carnivores; where humans die as a result of eating their flesh Like the most triumphant clarion calls made by Jason and his five piece, it was an intricate wake up call. There's a problem in trying to get your point across to people, and I'm one of those who feels I need to justify what I've said all the time I feel guilty about what I do that I've got a new sofa, a big telly, manage to pay my mortgage, can buy myself a car two cars three, four five Yeah, oh shit, that means I'm so bad. But does it really? I don't remember saying that I was going to be the tropedau of social fucking conscience.

I'm not going to sit in self-flagellation, like a monk. What I talk about in my songs is a need for balance, that we as humans - should treat this planet and its animals with respect. The thing about nature is that it's all been worked out, and we shouldn't be tampering with it.

"All I've ever done is react to what I see. Right now it's all about genetics, something I've been talking about for many a year. That's how the single 'Virtual Insanity' came about, and literally the minute I've finished it there was something on TV about animal to human organ transplantation. About how one day it will be possible for the family pet to father a human child."

At this point he cradles an Imaginary baby "nice doggy, nose is a bit wet, but he looks like Daddy!" I mean, we're feeding cows to cows and no one thinks anything's going to go wrong with that?! "People don't understand that the person who gets up on the stage and takes the stick for saying 'I wish we could be a bit more caring about the earth, I wish we could control our religious nuttiness, I wish we could stop seeing kids with nothing to eat, I wish you didn't really have to chop down all those trees and make that piss pot piece of furniture', is also the guy who wants to lump

into a car for a drive. There is a bravery involved in bringing subjects forward, there's a courage in saying it, and people forget that, instead they'll say 'ooh, lets talk about the cars...'

Would that be the 100 grand plus purple Lambourghini Diablo, in which our snapper photographed JK prior to the tour? The one which was used by Jason's driver to uproot six concrete bollards in a sidestreet in Chelsea and turned into a crumpled wreck? Or the replacement car despatched by Lambourghini to Spain for the video shoot for 'Cosmic Girl', only to end up pranged before Jason even made it to the set? Or one of the other seven currently sitting in JK's garage?

Given his lifestyle, it's easy to see why people scorn the pertinence of Jamiroquai's message, no matter how warranted his opinions. An act who'd perform gigs outside the Norwegian Embassy in protest to their whaling policy who'd always have a Greenpeace stand in the vestibule of their sell out concerts but who also went out and bought the car badges of materialism and motors to go with them. 'Yeah, I've got eight of 'em,' sighs Jason. "Seven are off the road. Yes, we know that they emit fumes. Sometimes though, the only thing that makes me smile is to get into 'em and burn down the road. I use them to travel as opposed to going two minutes down the road to get a pint of milk. Actually, I read somewhere the other day that I'm ranked fifteenth in the top earners of this country" he guffaws "£2.25 million Yeah?! Where'd you get that idea? Because after the tax the management's costs, the accountant and lawyer's fees... "

Jason exhales a plume of scented smoke When ... Space Cowboy emerged in late '94, it was supported by a poster campaign featuring the Jamiroquai effigy, altered into the shape of a pre-rolled spliff Conservative MPs were outraged. They claimed Jamiroquai were endorsing weed. Encouraging us all to cheeba cheeba. The title track spoke with delicacy of everything being "good and brown" that "maybe I'm gonna have to get high just to get by". While Jason was hardly as high as Method or Redman, he took a toke on stage at the Jazzid festival.

He shoves his filled Rizla forward The last time I had proper straight from yard, up-the bum ganja, I must have been what, about 20? You know, proper green that had you in fits of laughter. We had a brand the other day that looked like skunk. It smelt like skunk, but there was nooo buzz to be had at all. " And cocaine? The drug of the musically established? He laughs loudly, throwing his head backwards. "Now how did I know that'd be the next question? Of course, I've done it Its a crap drug. Let's just say that many a personal battle has been waged against it."

Jason's campaign against coke is nothing compared to the record industry bidding war which was declared after the underground success of Jamiroquai's 'When You Gonna Learn'. They left the Soho based independent label Acid Jazz (which now houses Gregory Isaacs and The James Taylor Quartet) for an eight album deal with Sony Records. Or rather Jason signed the eight album deal.

"Yes, I'm the one who's signed to the record company and I'm the one who pays the band. But we all knew that the record company tried to get rid of the band that they didn't want to sign them, that they didn't think Wallis's 'wooden pipe' was important But I need them," he sighs, I could have worked with other musicians, but what's the point? We wouldn't have built a relationship.

"As for the eight albums, where did anybody get the idea that an eight album deal was cool? That's not a good deal. People should know that could, at a squeeze, take me until I'm 35 years old and I'm only 26 now.

It's a good job I didn't sign with the band 'cause the drummer's already changed - and I know what happens when the record company asks everyone what they want and everyone says, 'Er I want this,' 'Weren't we gonna do it like this?' I tell you what I'm gonna sign the deal, and instead of you being a session musician, you'll get regular work, you can co-write the songs and get publishing rights. "Shit, I might not be here if it was on 25% control. No way I'm running the boat, and if anybody has any complaints, when we get to port then tell me."

Doesn't that make you a megalomaniac? "No, because I went through megalomania with someone else. My mate Elan was so dominant - 'I need to write some lyrics/I need to put some music on this/I need to that/this/that', while I'm there going 'So, is it OK if I sing on this?' I wouldn't do that to the guys. You can go and ask them what they think about this situation. But we've already asked ourselves, do we want it as a long term plan or are we gonna do what we've seen happen to so many other bands? Yeah, we want BMWs for everyone, we all want a holiday, and have no money left to record or promote an album? We're starting to have security here. Simply Red just asked Derrick [the drummer] to join them, but he knows it he goes to Simply Red it'll be a case of 'see you Derrick' when they find a better drummer. In this set-up he's a valued member.

He stands up, stoically. "It's been said to me We've heard you intimidate your band. 'Intimidate my arse! They can always walk out the door but they don't Why? Because they know I've always wanted to create a situation where we do the music we want to do, music we know is tough and gives respect to our heroes. I wrote 80% of the second album and I regret not going big guns on it, but it made me realise that on the third one that I was gonna tell you how it goes 'cause remember I'm the mug who has to sing it.

'It's all done on track record When I was younger I always used to say 'Mum, Mum, can I borrow some money?' 'No, because your track record with giving it back is terrible.' 'Mum, why can't I get a bank account?' 'Because your track record with money is terrible' I might have a bad track record in every other thing in my life but I've got a good track record in this".

'If people choose to decide that because I'm 26 I'm a megalomaniac because I want loyalty off people in this cut throat, wanker business then so be it But let's face it We could be out there doing something different I could be giving you a quarter pounder with cheese, couldn't I. But if you're going to run a ship, everyone has to do their thing. Only one of us can see the coast, somebody's got to do, the ropes. The mast. The sails, and yes, I'm sorry the anchor's heavy but it's your job to pull it up."

**JK Interview #35 | Irish Times
October 18th 1996
"Hatman" By Kevin Courtney**

A short history of Jamiroquai in which JK rants and raves about the reception of Travelling

Some might say it's in his walk; a streetwise, feline strut which suggests agility and attitude. Others might say it's in his voice; a soulful, naturally-syncopated scat which calls to mind a looser version of Stevie Wonder or a buzzier Billy Preston. But I say it's in his hat, which furls around Jason Kay's head like an extension of his own identity, a strange, furry creature which bobs precariously above the 27-year-old's animated, alert figure.

Don't believe the hype, though: the 27-year-old singer with funky pop band Jamiroquai does not eat, drink and sleep in his headgear - although he did wear it to battle later on, when Jamiroquai played their storming show at Dublin's Point Depot. No, he's just trying on this particular number, which is being styled for him by one of Britain's top milliners. And here was me thinking that Jason picked up his trademark hats in second-hand stalls and flea markets, or simply scraped them off the side of the road. "I used to," jokes Jason, "My first hat was actually a bag!"

So is this a way of asserting your individuality, then? Wearing a hat, I mean, not a bag. "Yeah, I think that's something I've yearned for all my life, to be a little bit different - which I suppose manifests itself in the music you've chosen, or the way you approach it. Because I don't think we approach music on a street level, and I don't think we approach it on a wholly commercial level either. It's just approached on good quality music, real musicians, and live, and played all at once. It is the basis of what music used to be."

What music used to be is encapsulated in Jamiroquai's three albums, Emergency On Planet Earth, Return Of The Space Cowboy, and the newest one, Travelling Without Moving. Basically, it's a revival of all the groovy, musical values we treasured back in the Swinging Seventies, but which most of us have relinquished to the tyranny of Techno, with its pre-programmed samples and read-only memory. Jamiroquai's music offers an organic option, sampling the energy and the vibes of pop's past, and trying to unearth ideas which still connect with the party people of the 90's.

Yes, you could call it retro, but rather than shuffling down memory lane, Jason believes he's dancing along the yellow brick road towards a brighter future. Jason's immersion in "quality" music began with his mother, Karen Kay, a singer in the tradition of Dinah Washington, Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday. She was also Britain's first female impressionist, starring in the 70's comedy series, Who Do You Do? "She was very good, did Shirley Bassey and Lena Horne spot-on," says Jason.

Some would say that Karen's son has inherited her impressionistic talent, particularly the ability to "do" a certain blind, black Motown wunderkind. How do you plead, O Behatted One?

"I think that that accusation has to be dropped after a while. I mean, it's a bloody good impression to be keeping up after five years and three albums and about 400 live shows. It'd be nice if people could actually look and think, well, you know, I have actually done some stuff, I did write some of the music, I wrote the lyrics - just little things, you know, nothing special! "Inevitably, things will end up sometimes sounding derivative, because of the nature of the music. But if you put on a Jamiroquai record and then you put on a Stevie Wonder record, there's a million miles between them. The only small link between them, and let's face it, this Stevie Wonder thing started with someone going, 'who do you like?', and I went, 'I love Stevie Wonder', and the next minute, all I read was how I wanted to be Stevie Wonder, that I copied Stevie Wonder, that I'd nicked Stevie Wonder's songs, and I'd nicked his riffs and how he sings."

None of which is true, of course, as even a casual listen to Travelling Without Moving will confirm, although a nagging doubt still hangs over the hook-line for Jamiroquai's early single, "When You Gonna Learn?" However, in an age where Oasis can lift the intro to John Lennon's Imagine almost wholesale for their Number One hit, Don't Look Back In Anger, and Ocean Colour Scene can carefully retrace the steps of 60's Britpop, having a bit of Stevie in your voice seems like a minor misdemeanour. But Jason has been accused of a far more heinous crime, i.e. copping a black sound and selling it back to white people.

Jason brings up the subject himself. "What people have gotta remember is, they say, oh, you've been successful off the backs of black musicians and people who didn't get a chance, and they've picked you, the little white guy, to go forward. But then again, a lot of the magazines that write this are the people who didn't give them the coverage in the first place. And you left me to hold that spot. So it's no use blaming me - I don't run the record company."

The buzz about Jamiroquai began in 1992 when the band released the Wonderful single, "When You Gonna Learn?" on London's hip Acid-Jazz label, which led to an eight-album deal with Sony's S2 label. The debut album, Emergency On Planet Earth, announced itself with a simple cover illustration: a silhouette of Jason wearing a large horned hat, making him look a bit like a buffalo-headed hippie. The silhouette has since become the instantly-recognisable Jamiroquai logo, and on the new album, Travelling Without Moving, the logo has been incorporated into a Ferrari-style crest, a nod to Jason's abiding love for classic cars. "They're calling me a gas-guzzling environmentalist," he complains. The first single from the album, "Virtual Insanity," has already become a massive hit, and songs like "Cosmic Girl," "High Times" and "Use The Force" have honed Jamiroquai's 70's sensibilities to sharper effect. How much is Travelling a progression from the previous two records?

"I think what it was, on the first album, it was very jazzy, and the content of the lyric was not the sort of thing that people danced to. People don't dance and go, 'yeah, yeah, chopping down the trees!' The second album, the lyrical

approach is very different; I became introspective on it, because I got so sick of hearing journalists tell me that I was some kind of guy preaching about the environment, you know, just because I cared that we should be a little sensible with our beautiful countryside and the beautiful creatures that were in it. And suddenly I was the troubador of social conscience, and I don't wanna be that, I just wanna make a point."

"And now I'm getting knocked with this new album, that you need a lobotomy to hear the lyrics, but look, it's like, shit, you listen to some of the funkiest and greatest tunes, and the lyrics are, 'Hey, hey, hey, what you gotta say!' What I'm saying is that if you wanna make people dance, it's good to empty out, and that's why a song like "Alright," which is the danciest tune on this album, is very simple."

So is this Jamiroquai's new agenda, to get the people dancing a bit more and thinking a bit less? "Yeah, it is, I mean, because my big complaint was, we'd go on the stage, and although everyone loves it out there, I'm not really enjoying it, I wanna have a boogie, I wanna move about. And it's like, oh, this is just a bit jazzy, we haven't got something that goes bang! And the key to all this is, and I don't mean to sound like a record company executive, but I really wanted to get it out of that one-point-three million, one-and-a-half million records and get it up to, like, five. Let's start kicking some ass here."

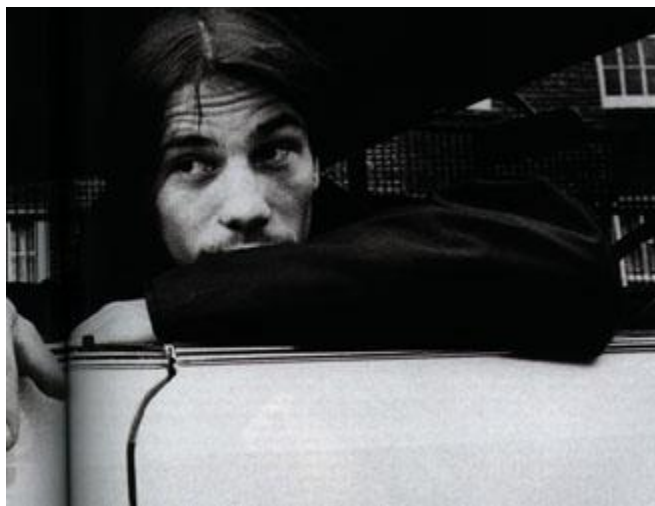
Ah, so it's all coming out now! Has the cat in the hat finally been exposed as a corporate rock pig who just wants to shift as many units as humanly possible, and who believes that the quickest way to the kids' wallets is through their butts? Is he trying to get five million people moving to his music, or just trying to get them to shell out 15 quid apiece and fatten his bank balance? "A bit of both, really!" laughs Jason. "Because it buys you time; success buys you time. Time makes you a better next album. And I don't ever want it to drop from this standard ever again. I think this is a good album, it's the one I like. And the key is, it's proving to yourself that, hey, what you like, other people like. That's what it's all about, and on your point of getting five million people to jig up and dance down to it, yes. Then you know you've hit the spot somewhere."

JK Interview #36 | Esquire (British Version)

October 1996

"Jay At The Races" By Greg Williams

"Jay Kay doesn't do things slowly. His career started up at full throttle, but his fast talking got him in trouble. Greg Williams catches up with Jamiroquai."



Jay Kay doesn't do things slowly. His career started up at full throttle, but his fast talking got him in trouble. Greg Williams catches up with Jamiroquai.

I am sitting in a Ferrari 355 that is travelling at 110mph while weaving through slower traffic-- the cars dawdling along at 60 and 70mph-- round a motorway slip road. Next to me Jason Kay, the man synonymous with the band Jamiroquai, grips the steering-wheel, frowns slightly and studies the grey tarmac that rushes towards us so quickly that it seems to be falling upon us. It is the first time he has been quiet all day, momentarily interrupting his repertoire of banter and helter-skelter, work-in-progress singing. He wears no sunglasses, even though it's a bright, sunny day, and his brown eyes catch the reflections of the traffic hurtling towards him.

There had been general amusement in the Jamiroquai camp when I volunteered for a drive with Kay. One band member shook his head and admitted that he's baled out of the car in Camden Town during a short trip across London. Kay's PR looked at me knowingly and asked if I'd written a will yet. His manager promised to come to my funeral. His girlfriend told me that I'd be OK.

Earlier in the day Kay had shrugged off the banter while striding around his west London home enthusing about his latest acquisition, a £161,000 mauve Lamborghini Diablo SE 30, one of only three in the country. Kay, you see, loves his eight cars like people love their kids: he shows you photos of them, tells you involved stories about them and ensures that they enjoy the best care and attention. It seems no great wonder, this pop star-- Sony's most successful British artist since George Michael-- and his fascination with the quick and the dangerous. But, says Kay, his passion for fast cars is not the idle curiosity of a wealthy man but something that has been a defining influence throughout his life. Looking around his flat you are inclined to believe him: there are not many pop stars whose book shelves bend under the weight of stacks of organized and ordered car magazines.

"This is something of beauty, something with a soul, something of value. I'll have this when I'm 50," he says pointing to the Ferrari down Uxbridge Road. A Golf GTi tries to pull in front of him. "No, no, no..." he says passing the VW, wagging his finger. "I like to do things quickly; I hustle about. I move quickly, so it suits me. The thing about this car is it depends how you carry it. I'm not going up and down the Edgware Road grinning at girls; it's my mode of transport. Four years ago I was on a skateboard, but I had a vision, and I worked at it doing 90 gigs a year and taking a twelve-piece band. And I'm making a living now and so are the other lads. I'm not trying to say 'I've made it.'" He gestures at his outfit-- a black Ralph Lauren polo shirt, beige cords and Adidas Gazelles. "Bear in mind I don't have a wardrobe full of Versace. I'm still the same old scruffy cunt."



We stop at a garage under the Chiswick flyover. "I am working for something," says Kay hopping out of

the car. "I want to have a life beyond being a public puppet. I pay for it in lack of privacy, the students standing at the end of my street shouting, 'Jamiroquai is a wanker!'" He lapses into one of many impressions, this time of a posh medical student, elongating his face and ironing out his twisted vowels so that he sounds like Hugh Grant: "Nice car, mate. But your music's shit." Kay pumps some petrol into the tank of the car, which costs £35 to fill up and does 20 miles to the gallon, and tosses me a soft drink named Oasis. "Bloody good those," he says with a grin. "Pity the band's crap." Aware that he might later be quizzed on his reconciliation of a V8 internal-combustion engine with his Green politics, Kay points out that his car has a four-way catalytic converter which he reckons stops 95 per cent of emissions. He fires up a B&H; floors the accelerator and heads onto the M4 like he's got a rocket up his arse, which, of course, he has.

Jamiroquai's latest album, Travelling Without Moving, which is released this month, is the band's third, and couples their brand of summer's day funk with more sophisticated arrangements and songwriting than their two previous albums. The influences are clearly jazz-funk masters of the Seventies-- Don Blackman, Johnny Hammond, Roy Ayers-- but there is a modernity and freshness to the album which somehow gives it greater range and scope than the band's work to date. Kay is convinced, in his infectiously enthusiastic and ambitious way, that the band are staking out new territory.

The title of the album was inspired by a friend of Kay's who, having experienced his whirlwind Ferrari, described it as like travelling without moving. "I love space, I love space technology," says Kay. "I always wonder when we're going to be able to get to the stage where we are travelling without moving, when we're on pods that use superconductors and the earth's gravity to float. There's also the sense that the world is travelling without moving socially and economically and environmentally. And we're also physically travelling without moving at the moment because we're doing a 1,000 miles an hour as the earth spins on its axis."

Ask Kay what he means when he says the world is not moving socially and economically and he embarks on a passionate explanation that takes in war, famine, the National Lottery, the internal combustion engine, the failure of high technology, genetics, BSE, intensive farming, the lack of political leadership and the evils of television.

This is perhaps why Kay is treated so badly by the press-- the very fact that he is willing to explain himself, that he wants to open up and share his views on the world makes it hard for the rock-hearted British media to regard him with any affection. Kay is a music journalist's worst nightmare: the pop star who won't smash up hotel rooms or drive Cadillacs into swimming-pools. The man-- shame on him-- who donates 7 per cent of his merchandising profits to Greenpeace.

"You just watch the news every day and you see shit go on and you wish it wouldn't go on and then you think that you can do something about it," he says. "Three years ago you thought you could do something about it; now you realize that if you express your ideas too much people are only going to knock you for it. So you think, hold on a minute, I've got to live my life as well. If another 55 million people can't get off their arses...I'm one of those people who does want to justify why I do things because I feel that I'd be a fool to try and say things to people without having thought through what I'm saying. It's like driving a car. In a sense there is no justification for it."

Kay's strange mix of rawboned irreverence and sage practicality is rooted in his upbringing. His mother, Karen Kay, was a dancer and singer who enjoyed fame in the Seventies with her own television programme, The Karen Kay Show. "I was an only child," he says. "I had an identical twin brother who died when he was young. And my life as a youngster involved travelling with my mum across the world-- Africa, Las Vegas, South Africa. She used to work singing in cabaret and stuff. And, when I got older, we settled down for seven, eight months, a year and off we'd go again. So I was very much a kid who was on his own and I learnt that people bite and I've evolved perhaps into quite a suspicious human. I've created a situation with this band where I have some friends, really good friends, we stick together and I

look out for whoever looks after me. We have a little family, if you want to call it that, and it's the first time I've ever had that situation. It's all about trust with people-- people will just sting you, sting you, sting you. As a kid I was always stung like that. I was always done over by people and I became quite bitter." A self-deprecating smile plays across his lips. "That was when I came up with my master plan that I was going to become a singer and fuck everybody over."

Born in Stretford, Manchester, on December 30, 1969, Jason Kay spent much of his childhood travelling the country with his mother in a Triumph Herald 13/60 convertible, eventually settling in the west London suburb of Ealing when he was thirteen. He knows little of his Portuguese father. "I've never met him," he says. "I've only got one picture. I've got to go find him. He'll be proud of me. He's probably driving a Fiat 500."



Kay left school with four O levels and bummed around a bit, earning a living on the street. Not being able to read music, his early efforts were based on a drum machine in his bedroom and musician friends who could make reality what he sang to them. Eventually a friend helped him get some studio time to record a demo. He was signed immediately by Acid Jazz, who thought that the soulful music on the demo had been made by a black man.

*His success was sudden and maybe a surprise even to the confident Kay. In October 1992 *When You Gonna Learn?*, a spicy bit of funk that somehow seemed too well formed to be a debut single, crossed from being an underground nightclub hit to becoming a party anthem that your drunken neighbours might play continuously for hours. The majors sniffed the air and a bidding war ensued that saw Kay sign an eight-album deal with Sony, receiving an advance of £100,000.*

*The band's first album *Emergency on Planet Earth* was a phenomenal success in the way that only pop music that is new and fresh and touches people can be. It became the fastest-selling album since George Michael's *Faith* in 1987, shifting 100,000 copies in its first week of release in June 1993. Kay was somehow perfect for the time; his frisky dancing and retro style touched a nerve throughout Britain where black music had entered the mainstream.*

*During the summer of its release it became almost impossible to escape Kay's falsetto woven among the band's basslines and funky licks. A month after its release I remember going out shopping in central London. Five consecutive shops were playing the *Jamiroquai* album. Kay's face became the most ubiquitous celebrity mug in town, easily recognizable by the huge medicine man's hat on top. He was suddenly public property. This was no love affair of gradual acceptance and affection, this was full-on, all-out lust and it was more than Kay could probably have hoped for. The world was besotted with him.*

*But, like many love affairs, things went wrong. With his willingness to talk and his outspoken opinions-- mainly on politicians and the environment-- Kay was an easy target for the sixth form common room cynicism of the music press and by the time the second album, *The Return of the Space Cowboy*, was released in October 1994, Kay's relationship with the media was at breaking-point after a series of pieces that accused him of everything from plagiarizing black artists to naively shooting his mouth off.*

"I didn't promote the second album because I'd been scared off by everyone having a dig at me," he says. "To be honest, I'd sunk myself into a fair old pitch of drug abuse, which is in my past now. At the end of the day it's life. You go through it, I sang about it and now it's over." He grins, aware of the rock star cliché of what he's said. "I could be a boring bastard and sit here and say, 'Let's talk about music and nothing else.' Let's not talk about any of the other real-life things that affect us all. The people out there, I'm sure they want to know that someone like me is exactly like them. I'm just doing a job. I say my piece in my songs. If people choose to ask me what I wrote the song about then I'll tell them-- the things that make me angry, the things that annoy me-- I express those things in song. Now, if I was a great orator I'd be a politician, but I'm not, I'm good at making my point through my songs."

He may not be a great orator, but Jay Kay can talk. Ask him one question and you'll probably never need to ask him another. He talks and he talks and he talks. He also listens, which talkers are not always apt to do. When he's standing and listening he holds himself in a particular fashion, with one hand on his hip, head bowed slightly forward as if he's trying to blot out everything else so that he can concentrate on what you're saying. It's a stance that he sometimes uses while performing, and on stage it can look slightly mannered. Yet this is the way he often stands when he's not bouncing round rooms talking to people, breaking into song, bodypopping, harmonizing and cracking jokes. Had he been born into medieval England he would most certainly have been a court jester. "This is Mecca," he says pulling in to the Maranello Ferrari garage in Egham. He leaps out of his car, runs across the courtyard and, like a kid, bowls an imaginary cricket ball at a set of invisible stumps.



His playfulness reminds me of watching a Jamiroquai show at Highbury fields in north London last summer during which Kay fired up an enormous spliff. Moments later he was dragged off stage by police. The crowd were confused and began to seethe with anger. Security men looked alarmed and started babbling into their walkie-talkies. Jamiroquai's publicist stared blankly at the stage and mouthed three words. "Oh. My. God." The band looked to the wings for advice, but kept playing. Seconds later Kay romped back on stage, accompanied by the (fake) cops, and offered them a toke on his roll-up. "None of us knew what the hell was going on," says guitarist [sic-- keyboardist] Toby Smith. "Kevin [Jamiroquai's manager] shouted to keep playing, so we did."

But this, of course, if by no means the whole picture. Kay is an unusually canny musician who not only has an ear for a good tune but is careful to take care of every single aspect of the band. When I arrive at his home, he is conducting a telephone interview, while his manager waits to talk to him about the Japanese tour. On the table are showreels from prospective video directors. When we get back from the drive he receives a package of the track listings and credits that are due to go on the album, which he checks meticulously. Five minutes later, his costume woman arrives. Kay oversees every aspect of Jamiroquai-- from marketing of the band to the design of the album sleeve-- in a way that few pop stars would care to.

"I think I'm not very good at being a pop star," he says, "because I don't want to be manipulated by a record company. I mean, you are manipulated by a record company whether you like it or not, but I don't want to be an idiot who gets told things. I don't want to be someone who's desperate for publicity, who looks to have his photo taken all the time and turns up at events saying, 'Hi, I'm Jamiroquai,' because I don't think that becomes me and I don't think it becomes the rest of the band or the style of music we do. I feel we want to keep a little distance.

"I remember being in tears about two weeks after signing with Sony because I'd thought I'd done the wrong thing. They tried to push a producer on me who was obviously an asshole and whose previous work included Erasure and Sinitta-- well, you ain't doing my stuff, baby...I really thought that I had done the wrong thing. Let's face it, the rung you start on or how they first perceive you, that's how they'll always perceive you. If they perceive you as strong and independent and doing the style of music we do and not being really ultra-pappy then that's how they'll perceive you. But I know you can't avoid being commercial. You have to be commercial."

Kay and the Ferrari man finish up their business at the garage, which is clean enough to double as a operating theatre. Kay signs an autograph for one of the mechanics and heads home for another meeting. "I have never looked at this as a short-term career," he says, gunning back down the M4 towards London. "I've never thought, 'Oh, yeah, I'm going to be around for a couple of years, try and make as much dough as I can and then fuck off.' I want to stick around, I want to develop this and I want to be fair. I want to earn a healthy fucking living out of this so I can facilitate some of my ventures later on in life. I'd like to spend some time seeing this world, seeing what goes on, and seeing the rhinos before they're all gone." As we pass through Shepherd's Bush he momentarily turns the stereo down and points to a piece of graffiti. "Cannibis, not cars,' it said on that wall," he says, laughing. "You can have both with me." With that, Jason Kay puts the pedal to the metal and heads for home.

JK Interview #37 | Muzik October 1996

"MUZIK Gets Personal With Jason Kay" By Sonia Poulton

Jay says, "I follow the religion of the trees and the greenery. I follow the religion of the moon. I believe in what people leave behind them in the sense of trails and spirits, the energy which they project. I believe in the vibrations, which is what the whole world runs on."

When and where were you born?

"Stretford, just up the road from the Manchester United ground. I was born on December 30, 1969, at the end of the end. It was at the end of the decade and a decade of change at that. I was an identical twin, but my brother died when he was six weeks old because he had terminal brain damage. It broke my poor mum's heart. But then again, can you imagine two of us?"

Maybe you are the two of you?

"That is actually something which has crossed my mind. I've often thought about how things are happening for me. If I want something to go certain way, it generally does. After getting a deal, for example, I new my debut album was going to get to number one. Sure enough, it did. And I've kind of saved my own life a few times. I've always had that,

it's almost as if someone is looking out for me. It sounds dumb, but I always think it is because there were two of us. One of us went, but it's somehow like someone is still attached to me. It's almost as if I'm living the life of the two."

What was your childhood like?

"I didn't come from a rich family. My mum, Karen Kay, the seventies jazz singer, worked her ass off to give me what she could. She should have had the success which I'm getting. She pretty much brought me up on her own and, during the first few months of my life, we went to Nigeria and then Las Vegas, where she did three shows a night, the last one finishing at five in the morning."

Where did you call home?

"Nowhere. We just went from place to place to place. I remember being woken up in the middle of the night by my mum saying, 'Come on, we're going now'. She didn't have much choice, though. More often than not, it was because she couldn't afford to pay the rent."

What about school?

"I ended up at a school in Leicestershire. I was there for around a year and a half. It was the longest period I was anywhere. Each time, I'd bounce into the next school and they'd be like, 'Oh there's the new guy', and I'd be like, 'Yeah, but I'm the funny guy, the one who will be at the back of the class making a noise'. You have to make your own space and barge your way through."

Do you have any conflicts?

"All the time. Even with myself. For instance, I went through agony wondering if I should base the 'Travelling Without Moving' album around the motor car. I love speed, you see. I was a bit worried about what people would say bearing in mind that the first album was about the environment. Then I thought, 'Well hold on a minute, just because I love to drive a fast car, that doesn't mean I believe in chopping trees down. It doesn't mean I think they should build more roads for my car'. The bottom line is I will open doors for old ladies."

Do people insult you?

"All the time. I was recently interviewed by this German journalist who told me the lyrics on the new album were crap. I bounced off that, but this same guy called me a dictator in the studio. I said to him, 'I'm a dictator, am I? Stop the tape and get out!'"

Do you feel under attack?

"I have gone past the point of having to justify myself to anybody. I tell people, 'You try picking up the paper and reading a load of shit about yourself. See how you feel'. I am not going to deny myself things which I've wanted since I was a kid. At least I have the courage and the conviction to go for what I want."

How has the world altered your personality?

"I have been shat on by so many people that my instinct now is to be very suspicious. I didn't used to be like that, though. I used to be really open, but people used that to read on me. I changed when I was 21. I was just sick of people taking liberties with me."

Do your neighbours know who you are?

"Yeah, people stand underneath my window and shout, 'Jamiroquai is a wanker'. What's worrying is these people are professional guys. It's really scary to think they're probably doctors."

Have you ever believed in any sort of conventional religion?

"No, siree! I follow the religion of the trees and the greenery. I follow the religion of the moon. I believe in what

people leave behind them in the sense of trails and spirits, the energy which they project. I believe in the vibrations, which is what the whole world runs on."

What do you think of power?

"You use it to make someone jump, but it should be the right person. Not the guy making tea down the studio, but the wanky record company executive."

How do you think other people see you?

"I step on toes real easily. I don't just step in shit, I sit and roll around in it."

What are your future ambitions?

"I want to find a little place in the country, somewhere with a studio and fields out the back where I can keep a few goats and chickens. I would really enjoy the simple lifestyle. There's also the other side of me, the one which drives a Lamborghini and a Ferrari, but I'm not actually Mr Super Slick. My bedroom is not full of designer suits. I guess it is down to those different characters of mine once again."

JK Interview #38 | Touch

October 1996

"Virtual Reality"

"Jamiroquai isn't just about a mouthy white boy who thinks he's Stevie Wonder, or an ecological evangelical who drives thirsty motors. It's not just big hats and fancy marketing either. It may have been overlooked but, most of all, Jamiroquai is about wicked music. With his third (and best yet) album on the street, Touch met up with the motor that drives the Jamiroquai engine."

Jamiroquai isn't just about a mouthy white boy who thinks he's Stevie Wonder, or an ecological evangelical who drives thirsty motors. It's not just big hats and fancy marketing either. It may have been overlooked but, most of all, Jamiroquai is about wicked music. With his third (and best yet) album on the street, Touch met up with the motor that drives the Jamiroquai engine.

Jay K is late. We're hanging around a photography studio in Newington Green on a dreary afternoon in August. On the table in front of us there are several photography journals filled with images of beautiful Parisian models and a scattering of car magazines whose pages offer equally glamorous fantasies. Then again, they may be fantasies for most of us, but not for our interviewee. For Jay K, it just so happens that women and classic cars are his favourite subjects.

Countdown to part three in the Jamiroquai anthology and that means a ball-breaking schedule. This week alone the band have appeared on Top Of The Pops and the White Room, and had numerous photo shoots and interviews with a British press who, in the past, have hardly been kind to the 26-year old from Ealing. Those journalists who have rejected the Jay-saves-the-world lyrical stance of the first album and repeatedly ridiculed his buffalo hat image may, however, have fell for the introverted tone of the second release, 'Return Of The Space Cowboy'. Muting his soapbox rantings is one thing, but silencing - or even taming - Jay K they haven't. With the new album now on the streets, Jamiroquai's platform is as wide as ever and the band has never sounded so good.

"The key to 'Travelling Without Moving' is I wanted to make people dance," Jay says with an enthusiastic grin. "It's 'Hey everybody, Jamiroquai aren't just about tunes about the state of the world, Jamiroquai are about having a good time and boogie-ing and in direct opposition to the deluge of Britpop that we have to listen to". It's strange that he mentions Britpop. Whether he likes it or not, there are similarities between Jay K and his opposing Britpop number Liam Gallagher that go beyond age and height. They're both mouthy self assured and strike a balance between credibility and the mainstream. The difference is that Jamiroquai have a third album that kicks arse and widens the

gap between them and the rest of the dance based groups in Britain. Jay isn't wrong when he insists 'Travelling Without Moving IS concentrated on the boogie factor. The title track is a rip roaring, bass fuelled, fasten your seatbelt chase through a 70s disco groove that opens with the sound of what we can only presume to be the ignition of one of Jay's Ferraris. Throttle down, sliding up the gears, the tune virtually takes off with a thundering bassline that leaves your knuckles red from gripping the side of your seat. More of a fifth gear cruise, 'Use The Force' has a Latin tinged rhythm that gets absorbed in catchy Fender riffs and Wah Wah madness. Both tunes leave you breathless. Another highlight is the infectious single 'Virtual Insanity', an updated 'When You Gonna Learn' this time reminding people of the dangers of fiddling about with DNA in laboratories.

But there's more to the album than that. The sweet, laid back soul of 'Spend A Lifetime,' 'Alright' and even the digeridoo funk of 'Digital Vibrations' feature Jay with a different hat on, and a hint at a man ready to bare more of his soul through his recordings. "Yes I have been in love," he says. "And yes, I've been tussling and fighting and arguing with someone, loving them and screwing them up people all over the world can relate to that."

Is Jay growing up? "I think it's nice to get a bit maturer and maybe make your image a little less scruff bag and little bit slicker" he says. Part of that is engineered for the yanks cos we do want to sell some records that's what keeps you on the road." That said, Jay admits he's still on the prowl for that perfect romance. 'Cosmic Girl', he says is a song written especially with her in mind. So who is she? 'Er one of those birds who you see in a room and you go Wow, that girl must be from space,' he chuckles. "We're looking at something sort of...," he reflects for a second... 'Puerto Rican crossed with Phillipino and just a smattering of Brazilian perhaps. Or maybe Jamaican Chinese looks or something.' Derrick, the drummer nods in agreement- Jay, clearly, is wising up more on the marketing of his image stateside than he is on affairs of the heart.

The barrage of criticism Jay has faced since Jamiroquai exploded onto the scene almost four years ago is down to two things. Patronising middle class snobbery from journalists who don't like the idea of a cocky ex dealer being more successful than they ever will be, and the fact that Jay K and he'll agree with this dishes himself up as easy prey- Jay wears his heart on his sleeve and, unfortunately for him, people are only too eager to rub his nose in it. I'm a show off, he shrugs. 'I always was and I always fuckin' will be. I need a stage, I need to do this business, for now anyway until I decide that I can get out in a dinghy and be a militant environmental terrorist bastard. But until then I'm driven by the need for the buzz.'

This buzz has seen Jay laying out hundreds of thousands of pounds on classic cars. At the last count they numbered eight. Two Ferraris, three BMWs, a Lamborghini, an Aston Martin and a Mercedes convertible. It's not uncommon for successful musicians to hit the track, and Jay feels racing is just around the corner for him I like fast cars because they're a kick back from the bloody hassle of the music business which is, as you know, 80% business, 20% music." he says. I fuckin throw my bag in the fuckin' boot, boom, gone. Gone for days.

"I'm waiting for the day when I can settle back and forget about making music for six months and work out who I am and what I want. Hopefully what I'll do is get a bloody yard out in the country big bit of green space in the back, G series in the front, sit there and twiddle about and learn all day how to use it, shit that I don't get to learn cos from day one it's gone boom, like that," he says throwing his arms in the air.

There's nothing easy about driving a Ferrari or a Lamborghini Ask Jay K. But then, there's nothing easy about writing good music. And herein lies the key to understanding the man. I get personal inspiration from being under pressure, it's almost like I need to create a bit of strife for myself before it becomes worthwhile you know what I mean?" All that matters to Jay K is that he makes good tunes, the best video that he can and the best live performance possible. Oh, and that he keeps driving. "I love speed," he says. "In other areas of my life I may be inadequate," he jokes gripping his crotch, "But when it comes to motors, I'm tooled up. My tool's pink and it does 210 mph."

**JK Interview #39 | Blues And Soul
September 17th-30th 1996**

“Moving In The Right Direction” By Susie McClelland

A history of JK's ups and downs with the media and his relationship with drugs; Jay says, "Don't take drugs beginning with q. Do you want a Quaalude? Sorry mate. I don't take drugs beginning with q."



It's a Thursday lunchtime, and Jay Kay looks like he's just fallen out of bed. This is not the case though, rather he's just fallen out of his Ferrari, and scooted into the record company offices where his PR and assorted music industry hacks are waiting. He's an hour and a half late, but no one's going to hold it against him. At Sony HQ he's the prodigal son; one flash of that charming disarming grin and it's smiles, handshakes and kisses all round.

Jamiroquai have had a busy week. Monday saw them headlining the Kiss stage at the Notting Hill Carnival, something of a homecoming for the West London boys. The new single "Virtual Insanity" has hit the charts at number 3 and there's been the requisite flurry of photoshoots, meetings, interviews, and N. JK, despite a drawn appearance, is his ebullient self. The boy from Ealing with the big hats, big engines (alongside the Ferrari, he has an Aston Martin and a Lamborghini in the garage) and bigger attitude is currently livin' it large. With the London dates of the Jamiroquai tour sold out within hours, and the album "Travelling Without Moving" on the brink of chart domination for the immediate future, things are looking pretty good, surely?

"Well, it's fantastic to get the single in at no 3. I always think these things are going to happen before they do. The last album, to me, didn't merit the success of the first one, although in terms of sales it did. There were some great bits in both of them, and you can't have whole albums that make you turn round and go yeah! If you get two or three tunes that you actually really like ... like I've got on this album, I've got nearly every tune I can go through and say it's alright. It's a definite progression from the second album. That's down to good pre-production, starting to write the music a long time before you hit the big studio. I just knew this one would be good..." Jay jumps up, lights his breakfast B&H; "Yeah, I had to make this one good."

And in light of the serious quantities of flack, he's not far wrong about that. Because ever since the first single "When You Gonna Learn" four years ago, JK sure has been on the receiving end. But then a twenty two year old with the

persona and voice of a maverick angel, an eight album deal and a soapbox is bound to attract trouble. Jamiroquai was acid jazz's meteorite taking the genre into the corporate arena and remarkably still retaining cred. "Emergency On Planet Earth", the debut album with eco-vision and irrepressible funk sold 1.5 million copies. The Face magazine put Jay on the front cover, MTV slapped him on the back and on the playlist, people even thought he was Stevie Wonder for crissakes. Life, for Jason Kay was ever so sweet, or at least for a couple of months. The Sunday Times ran a feature on his classic car habit. Mixmag ran the equivalent on his relationship with drugs. Then came the backlash.

And Kay had certainly provided the ammunition. It's hard to take environmental advice from a cocky ex-dope hustler leaning out of a Smoke-billowing, monster-bucks sports car. With JK, it was social conscience on acid, and he did little to hide the fact.

Then came the inane verbal assaults, mainly in the white music press. Jamiroquai were guilty, apparently, of musical colonialism, in their "blatant exploitation" of black music. Looking back, the argument was facile and uninformed. Derivation is as old as the business itself, in fact everyone from Elvis to Pulp has referenced and back catalogued, paying dues in the process. Nevertheless such criticism takes it's toll.

"That argument is a load of cock [hold on, I can't print that] - OK complete and utter cockadoodledoo. It's just rubbish, a prime example of people looking so far into something they lose it. It's something I know about but it's got absolutely nothing to do with my music, you know. Every time I sit down and try and write a song, I don't try and look through four hundred years of colonialism and say 'oh, now I can write a song'. The implication is its only black people that can make music. Because, there was a guy that just wanted to make me look stupid. In a way he made himself look a racist, somebody that wants to keep black music exclusive for black people, so other people won't be inspired by it. There are millions of different people of every different creed and colour that's what the music we do is about. It's about all people being able to enjoy it, not a colour-coded few."

JK is on his feet again, pacing around the room. "...and with regards to the other stuff, I meant exactly what I said. It still sticks. I was talking on a scale there, it's planetary, not individually. It was heartfelt, it is heartfelt. I woke up one morning, I thought this is my first album, I'm going to write something here about what I feel, what I think. Consequently from writing things like that you question; you think, look at yourself now, driving a fast car, should I have this - what do people think. But then, hold on, can I have a life, can I enjoy myself, can I have a few things to enjoy myself with? If the car's part of the job then damn right. It's something I wanted since I was three and I'm going to drive a fast car, very fast, do what it's used for. Kick back and, lets face it, inspire myself."

That's the thing about JK, he's-well, he's intense. Angry, polemic and intense. He's a verbal freewheeler, and this can make his train of thought hard to follow. But no longer the wide-eyed spacekid hollering, "cheeba!" with little to plot but the next spliff.

"You engineer life for yourself. Well I do anyway. I try and engineer life for myself, try to lock all the bits into place, Try and learn every time there's a fork in the road, try and take the right fork, the fork you were supposed to take, all the time. That one, that one, not that one. Try to get where you want to go. I haven't got the full answer to where I want to go yet, but this bit's locking in nicely. I know it's all for something, it'll all turn out for something decent at the end of the day, that's what I mean."

His reflexivity is endearing. JK captivates a room with the same lyricism that captivates a 22,000 strong Carnival crowd. So what does he make of his success?

"Sometimes you think, hold on a minute is this all bullshit, what's it all about. Because sometimes it can make you feel stupid, you think why does everyone want to know about you for. Its really weird. At the same time, it can make you

feel really proud. I mean sometimes I wake up and think interview, great. Someone's going to ask me what I think about things and I'm going to tell them."

Deep, dirty laugh, - and he tells me what he thinks about a lot of things. Like how, in the early days he was "slowly and surely spiralling into fair criminal activity"; like how he knows he's living fast and he may die young. "The number 36 has always held some relevance." he pauses. "But if it ain't that I hope that I live to be a good old Capricorn grand-dad. Nice and energetic." He wants to do well, he states, so he can provide for his kids, create a stability he himself never realised. (He never knew his Portuguese father, and his mother was a Jazz singer performing all over the country.) But his childhood, he is quick to point out, has shaped his future. "When I was a kid I was always set so many tasks and chores there was nothing left to do but sing."

He's on his feet again, pointing at an imaginary junior Jay. "Rake those leaves! [enter the violin chorus] No seriously, I just went about singing and muttering and mumbling . . . then later on when I started to trip out of my mind, I'd try and do a thirty two piece orchestra with my mouth. Everything from Johnny Guitar Watson to Stravinsky." He giggles at the memory. JK is not as coy as his record company would like on the subject of his Class A dabblings. With this in mind I asked him about the thinking behind a track on the new album, "High Times".

"It's about the current situation with crack, the ring that a lot of young kids - without sounding patronising - are falling into. It's just drugs, the street, and then selling your arse, and what I'm basically saying is don't do silly drugs."

But doesn't this sound a bit 'do as I do ...'



"Nowadays I try to stay away from those 'I don't know what the long term effects are' drugs. Well I've never done loads and loads of ecstasy, and that is the one drug around that you don't know about, you see, with acid you do. You know if you take too much you turn into a nutter, look at me I'm half way there. At least I managed to stop. But dope, it's no great big deal, the other drugs aren't worth taking because, simply, they're crap."

"...anyhow, music makes a lot more sense than drugs. That's how I get my highs, that's how I want my highs. But the highs extend to more than that, they also extend to being in control of my personal life, and being in control of my personal life means being able to do music, and that is the drug. It's work, but it's not, because it's fun - it's pleasure. I get a buzz off this. The buzz is making the environment where you can do that all the time and no one can boss you about. The drugs are just a get through thing ... well they're not, they can also be inspirational but they become just a pain in the arse, just a bit boring."

So you are making a distinction. Are you drawing a line?

"I still haven't said anything! But you know it's a difficult business, every one needs to escape and sometimes you take the wrong turn - Oopsadaisy and it's a dead end. But that's alright because my car does a fantastic donut in the middle of the street, whips back down the other end to the main highway."

JK's laughing at his own analogy. And pretty soon it's contradictions-ville. After towing the anti-drugs line with aplomb, he quips, "Don't take drugs beginning with q. Do you want a Quaalude? Sorry mate. I don't take drugs beginning with q." Then it's off on a helter-skelter trip through Jayland. He mimics an acquaintance of the past. "Wanta Quaalude, I've got some lude. Good tomazi - Temazepam." "Good job I don't like marzipan, because every time I hear about Temazepam, I just associate it with nasty cakes, wedding cakes, Battenburg. Battenburg is probably the worst cake in the world." Derrick, his drummer is creased on the floor. It's probably best not to laugh, but frankly JK is quite funny. We manage to halt the tangent though, and JK focuses on something else he's been saying no to, of late: the remix brigade. Sony commissioned David Morales to produce a cut of "Space Cowboy". The result was a dancefloor smash, and the exercise has been repeated on "Virtual Insanity". JK is reputed to be less than over the moon. "Yeah well, there were certain aspects of it I didn't like, but then he did a good job, everybody else liked it, what can I say?"

The Mad Professor is currently working on the new album's reggae(ish) tune "Driftin Along". Who else would JK sanction on the remix front?

"I'd like us to do them, and we are, which is why they're turning out 100 per cent better. We've got a couple of gems. We've got a mix of "Alright" which was done by Dj D-Zire [Jay's old mate Darren] and a mix that me, Derrick and Toby did of "Cosmic Girl". And we'll think of a couple of others to do.

"Trouble is though, you go on tour and they go 'now we've got to get a remix done, but you've got no time, so here's one we've done earlier.' And you go - I don't like it- and they go 'oh well it's out already.' So we're going to stop all that."

Jamiroquai have their critics. It's easy to build someone up in order to indulge in knocking them down. Time Out apparently had them scheduled for a front cover on Carnival issue and then pulled it, in conjunction with a pretty damning album review. Balancing mass appeal with musical cutting edge is difficult to envisage. But whilst those around are Brit-popping or drum 'n' spacing it JK and band are still trying to be true. Asked if they've ever considered a cover version, Jay gets animated.

"Gil Scott Heron's "Lady Day" and John Coltrane. That is really like, the one. I can really sing with it, I know it would really work with the line- up we've got. Bit of brass, perfect. Drums, rap off the beat no problem."

JK is half cocky fuckwit, half charisma on old school T's. And JK is a man held safe in the knowledge he possesses a voice both rare and sublime. It's a voice worth 3 million record sales and a voice that people want to listen to, whether it's on a melody or on hyperbolic overdrive.

"I just hope everybody likes the album. And the next one will be better. You know where you heard it first, as promised. They'll get better and better until one day truly, we'll make that tune that sits amongst the greats. It's got to be something that makes me get up and go yesssss! and jump ... I mean the thing is what I'm doing now, lets face it. What I'm doing now was only a vision in the first place so what ever you envisage you can make come true for yourself... Yeah! Visualisation."

I suppose at least he knows where he's coming from.

**JK Interview #40 | Evening Standard
September 9th 1996**

"The Cat Comes Out Of The Hat" By Tim Cooper

JK talks about his car fetish and the impetus behind Travelling

The cat in the hat used to talk non-stop about saving the environment. Three years on, they are still chopping down rainforests like there's no tomorrow in the Amazon Basin and Jay Kay- aka Jamiroquai- still can't shut up.

About fast cars.

'If only everybody had a Ferrari,' he muses, in apparent seriousness, 'the roads would be a better place.' Jay, who happens to have two Ferraris (and three BMWs, an Aston, a 'Lambo' and a 'Merc), peers out of the window of a north London pub, a look of horror on his face, as he spies a passing motor that fails to meet his high standards of aesthetic and mechanical approval. 'Ugh! Look at that sickly coloured lime-green Escort. How could anybody do that?' He looks pained.

Jamiroquai's 'difficult third album' comes out today and the elusive Jay has come to talk about it. He's even taken off his enormous hat, the hat he decided to wear long before he became a pop star so that, if he ever did become one, people would remember him but wouldn't recognise him in the street without it.

It seems to have worked. Signed to an unprecedented eight-album deal at the age of 23, he has sold three million copies of his first two - the jazzy, soulful number-one Emergency on Planet Earth and the equally successful 1994 effort, The Return of the Space Cowboy. He's already sold out his trio of London dates in November (including a prestigious Albert Hall engagement), and has, in Travelling Without Moving, made what is indisputably his most accomplished, and most diverse album to date.

Perhaps he'd like to talk about it; but first he'd like to talk about cars, which are, he confesses, one of the three loves of his life. 'Birds, motors, music...lovely!' he chuckles like an apprentice Rod Stewart, shaking his long hair out of its ponytail and grinning a stubbly grin as he prepares to justify the contradiction of trying to save the planet when he's polluting it with exhaust fumes.

'I'm not the troubadour of social conscience,' he explains. 'I never was. I'm just another of the 4,900 million people in the world. All I ever wanted to do was see common sense. The trouble is, you end up contradicting yourself.

'I'd wanted a fast car since I was three and now I've got one - well, seven - people say I'm not interested in the environment anymore, but it's not true. The same could be said of a Greenpeace delegate who flies to Australia for a conference, burning thousands of gallons of fuel. Life is contradictory...the whole damn thing is contradictory.' He frowns and shakes his mane of hair in confusion.

Then he's off again. 'My answer to people who criticise me for driving fast cars is to say: you make the Government take action to stop me driving around town, get them to offer us a safe, clean, efficient transport system with parking outside towns, and I'll stop. I don't like driving in towns anyway: I don't get much pleasure from driving 210mph cars down Regent Street when I could be doing 180 outside Paris.' He chuckles again. He goes into enormous detail about his last driving ban, predicts confidently that he's about to collect another one, and eagerly anticipates a forthcoming gig in Modena, Italy - home of Pavarotti, balsamic vinegar and, far more importantly for Jay, Ferrari - as 'like a Muslim going to Mecca for me.'

'I am a speed freak,' he adds, unnecessarily. 'I just love speed. Flying, driving...anything fast. I think it harks back to a childhood of watching Seventies programmes like the Riviera. For me, driving means

hurtling around at unmentionable speeds. To be 26 years old and burning around is the epitome of the young stallion.' He licks his lips with relish at his description of himself and orders a young stallion sort of drink. Cinzano Bianco. This boy really does think he's on the Riviera with Tony Curtis and Roger Moore. 'But I never found a girl with big enough breasts to pour my drinks down!'

There is a special girl, though (model-cum-lingerie designer Tamsin Greenhill), which is why there are a few more of what he calls lovey-dovey songs on the new album, along with a reggae number on which his singing sounds uncannily like Bob Marley.

'It's more lovey-dovey because I was engaged,' he explains, tantalisingly. It sounds like a scoop but he guffaws again as he realises what he's said. 'Not engaged! I've just been engaged in ... luuurve thangs!'

**JK Interview #41 | MTV Europe
September 1996
"Jamiroquai - A Biography"**

JK shares his thoughts on Travelling

It's been three years since Jamiroquai first funk'd up our lives. In that time the band have sold in excess of three million albums and become a sought after live act the world over. While their brand of brit funk is bigger than the majority of "Britpop" in terms of record sales they do not sit comfortably in that over hyped category. September sees the release of the band's third and finest LP to date, entitled Travelling Without Moving. This LP is sure to propel them even further into the musical stratosphere.

the history

Jamiroquai formed in 1992. Creating a massive underground buzz when their instant classic, "When You Gonna Learn?", was initially released on London independent label, Acid Jazz. Later that year, Jamiroquai had revitalised a club scene dominated by the faceless back room boys and the vocalists with personalities as disposable as their lyrics. Not only club goers but fans of soul, funk, disco- discerning music fans in general, knew they were onto something good. One record company bidding war later, Jamiroquai emerged with an eight album deal from Sony Music. All agreed they had the talent, individuality and appeal to sustain a long career.

Jason Kay, Frontman was loud, opinionated and controversial, but above all honest, at times a little too much for his own good. A burst of blanket coverage in the media was followed by the release of the debut album Emergency On Planet Earth which crashed into the charts at number one in June 1993, soon making Jamiroquai the top selling British debut act that year. 'Emergency' has sold over 1/2 a million copies in the UK alone. The second album, Return Of The Space Cowboy, confirmed that the soulful passion of their music had the strength to transcend boundaries of language and culture, outselling the first in territories such as Europe and Japan and going platinum in the UK. What emerges now is that Jamiroquai has without compromising their musical integrity, developed into a worldwide force to be reasoned with.

funk'd up

Jamiroquai has developed an eclectic following of many ages, lifestyles and musical preferences, drawn by the many facets of such a unique musical outfit. Style conscious clubbers appreciate the distinctive Jamiroquai sound, to be enjoyed whatever the prevailing trends. Top 10 tunes like "Too Young To Die", "Blow Your Mind" and Return Of The Space Cowboy still resound and rebound around the mind. The band are also one of the very few credible live acts to have risen from the club/dance scene. Shunning the use of tapes and sequencers that have long tainted that arena.

Playing live is central to Jamiroquai's philosophy and aspirations- they have headlining tours lined up all over the world for later in the year, with the UK tour on October.

the new album

Written by Jamiroquai, produced by JK with Al Stone, Travelling Without Moving finds 27 year old Kay and the boys producing their most accomplished and mature work thus far. The distinctive Jamiroquai lyrical and musical style is in clear evidence but sharper and more focused than before. Melodies ooze immovably into the mind and forays into new areas come to the fore on the hit jungle collaboration with M Beat, "Do You Know Where You're Coming From?", and the reggae tune (being remixed by the Mad Professor), "Driftin' Along". These are complimented by the rousing 90's disco of "Cosmic Girl", the slap funk of "Sliding" and the furious, percussive, horn ladden "Use The Force" composed for the Euro 96 compilation album.

The first single from the album "Virtual Insanity" (was released in August 1996) encapsulates Jamiroquai: a kind of "When You Gonna Learn?" part II, it's got its great melodies and thought provoking state of the world lyrics. Drugs are tackled on the album on "High Times" and love is there in abundance, as on the R&B; inflected "Everyday" and the heartrending ballad "Spend A Lifetime". The trademark didgeridoo is back also, with didgemeister Wallis Buchannan checking in on two of the 12 tracks.

JK Interview #42 | Mixmag September 1996

"How To Be A Popstar Without Really Trying" By Andy Pemberton

"Jamiroquai is back with album number three. But that jazz funk shit is old, so why the hell should we still listen to Jamiroquai in 1996? This is why..."



Jamiroquai is back with album number three. But that jazz funk shit is old, so why the hell should we still listen to Jamiroquai in 1996? This is why...

Jason Kay is singing an excerpt from a new tune he's written called 'Cosmic Girl.' 'I'm scanning all my radar,' he croons in that beautiful, girlish voice, unaffected by the succession of spliffs he's be smoking, "while she says she's from a class of quasi-stella objects first detected in 1963 that are powerful sources of radio waves and other forces of energy. Many have large red shifts greater than one point five which imply enormous velocities of recession, distances of several thousand million light years and illuminosities 200 times greater than that of an ordinary galaxy..."

Well...That's catchy.

"Hey! That's catchy!" he lisps in an accent that's half Sylvester The Cat, half the obsequious record plugger from the movie Spinal Tap. "That's a catchy lyric! That's concise!" As he closes the dictionary he's been reading from he turns to the four mates watching the interview from the far end of the room and everyone cracks up. In the galaxy of dance music 26 year old, Blackburn born Jay Kay of Jamiroquai is now a fully-fledged star. It shows in the ease with which he commands the attention of the room, the confidence to stop an interview and look up 'quasar' in a dictionary because he feels like it, then flash you a grin that he knows will make you enjoy his audacity. He brings up the topic of Britpop after doing a hilarious spoof of Blur's lyrics, and can't resist the opportunity to put the boot in.

"Now these bands are trying to sound like Mott The Hoople and The Beatles - FUCK OFF! Get out of here. Want to be The Beatles? You've got a lot of work to do my sons! You ain't the Beatles, none of them are The Beatles. People who compare themselves to the Beatles get on my wick. I like Stevie Wonder but I've never compared myself to him." He's shouting now as the four people in the far side of the room giggle nervously. Jay knows he's out on a limb, but he doesn't give a fuck.

"Britpop? It's a good job we didn't win the European Cup because this laddishness would've gone on til the end of time. I hate it and I don't like the hint of British bulldog nationalism underneath..."

The Cat In The Hat is back, with a pocketful of opinions, a brand new album, and his sights set on the major league. He's back on the jazz funk bus, a lone rider since The Brand New Heavies and The Young Disciples got thrown off about 20 stops ago. When everyone's wiggling out to Britpop, nodding their headz to trip hop or shaking their booties to drum'n'bass, techno and house, Jamiroquai are the last of the West London mafia still out there, doing it. But that jazz funk shit is old, man, why the hell should we still listen to Jamiroquai in 1996?

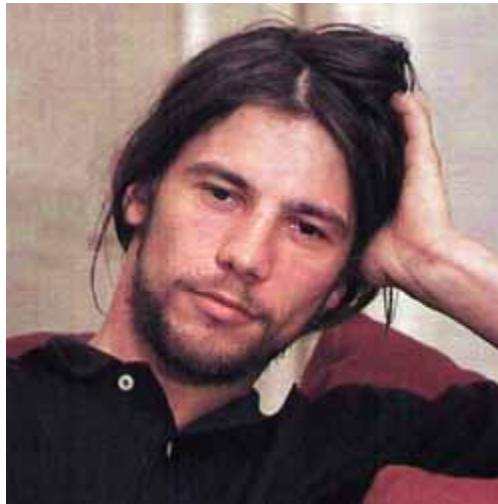
We're sitting at the dining room table in Jay's smart, but not flashy, West London mews home. There are car magazines scattered everywhere, a handful of pictures on the otherwise bare walls, not to mention a gold disc for his first album, 1993's 'Emergency On Planet Earth' (it went straight in the charts at Number One, fact fans). Jay, dressed in dark blue polo shirt with his long hair tied back, is hunched over a pad of A4 paper writing out the roll call of credits that will appear on his forthcoming album. Despite the spliff burning in his hand, he's doing an assiduous job, asking people in the room the name of an engineer, record company worker or marketing type. It seems a far cry from the spliff-fogged urban native one might expect.

Soon enough he puts down the pen and starts talking. And when he talks, you bloody well listen, because this boy is doing the business. Jamiroquai's maiden album, 1993's 'Emergency On Planet Earth,' went straight in the charts at Number One and went on to win over a funk-free Europe. 1994's 'The Return Of The Space Cowboy,' has sold over one and a half million copies worldwide. In the dance arena only M People get anywhere close to those kind of figures.

On MTV Europe Jamiroquai is an island of old skool hip in a sea of Euro-cheese and heavy rock. Just when you think you can't watch another fucking video, up pops Jay, ethnic hat, needle thin cords and old skool trainers, just singing and dancing into the camera. Anyone else indulging in that sort of caper in a video would look ridiculous, but Jay looks cool. MTV loves him. And so do his record company. A recent pre-album launch goodwill session saw Sony spring around £40,000 to take media, retail and radio big wigs on a day out to the British Grand Prix. The party flew into Silverstone by helicopter. Jay was there shades on joking around, even getting his picture taken with Labour leader Tony Blair. In dance music's limited frame of reference, Jay Kay is a fucking supernova.

But according to Jay, his move into pop stardom caused him all sorts of bother. Around the time of 'Return Of The Space Cowboy,' Jay felt the plot began to unravel.

"I was not enjoying myself at all, it was a sad album and I was going through real personal traumas as you can imagine," he says. "You sell 1.5 million albums but you ain't going to be jumping round your living room for joy going, 'Great, everybody hates me!'"



Jay was still recoiling from the vociferous attacks coming from journalists, accusing him of co-opting black music for his own ends and espousing ecological issues while bombing around town in one of his eight super-expensive, gas-guzzling sports cars. As Jay walked into the studio, the accusations of hypocrisy and cultural double-dealing were still ringing in his youthful ears.

So he ditched much of the eco-conscious lyrics that characterised his debut to make room for an edge of personal angst. Stung by the criticism he was also indulging in, um, personality-enhancing drugs.

"You have to work it out in your mind," he says, hinting at that brief spell of drugular activity. "Everyone goes through problems and sometimes you turn to things you shouldn't to alleviate the problem. I could blow all my money away on coke and waste my whole life away. I'm not denying that I haven't been through that little period. But if you want to last, don't do that. If you want to be a dickhead, go and do it, if you want to be a tinny, manipulated little popstar go and do it. I ain't going to be no victim. It's alright going down that road for 20 miles as long as you can turn around and go back and join the main motorway again. You can't go [sings] 'do do do do' if you sat up last night doing an eight ball (that's an eighth of an ounce or three and a half grams of cocaine, price £150 - the rich man's party pack). I'm fast enough as it is."

So he came out with tracks like 'Stillness In Time' and 'Half The Man' which hinted at a sense of confusion and personal loss typical amongst many in their early 20s trying to find their feet in the big bad world. The fact that he'd dropped the eco-angle and everyone knew he liked flash cars added to a sense that he was one of us, confused and unsure - pitching between decadence (the cars, the drugs) and panic and fear for the future, on a personal and global level.

That feeling of confusion which connected with so many of his listeners was underwritten by his image - there he was, effortlessly cool in old skool trainers and Guatemalan shirts, clothes anyone could afford. While Simply Red's Mick Hucknall naffed about in silky shirts and posh suits that made him look like a some aging, millionaire disco Lothario, Jay never lost his edge. Skate kids, househeads, hip veterans of the West London funk scene (who never deserted him) and even super cool US house DJs like DJ Sneak (a major fan) could all dig 'Return Of The Space Cowboy,' lock into its retro grooves and modern sensibility and never lose face. Meanwhile out in MTV land, thirtysomething couples could

rack up that non-threatening cool kid with the top tunes next to their Simply Red CDs. Everyone was happy. Except it seems, Jay Kay himself.

"You know when you didn't do something right," he says of the 'Return Of The Space Cowboy' LP, "you put the tape on and you keep fast forwarding it before you've even listened to the fucking second tune."

He's being a perfectionist - it was and still is an utterly modern, accomplished and emotional funk album. The emphasis was on Jay's beautiful, soaring voice, riding the complicated grooves that acted solely as a groovy" backdrop. So how does he account for its massive popularity if he believes it was so crap?

"Well.. I was going to say they've got no taste in music, but I'm only kidding, " he giggles. "I think the popularity of it to some extent was as a result of the Morales remix of 'Space Cowboy.' And it pains me to say that."

Ah yes. Remixes have never been Jay's most favourite thing in the world. A perfectionist and clearly a man in charge (Jay's is the name on the contract, he hires and fires), he was livid when his US label Work commissioned Morales 'Space Cowboy' remix last spring and Masters At Work to remix 'Emergency On Planet Earth' in 1994.

"I advised the American record company not to do that. There are two time changes in it and you're not going to get a machine to handle that and the vocal is not the sort of vocal that lends itself well to that house style of track. And it doesn't lend itself to a hip hop style track. THAT'S WHY I DO THIS MUSIC BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO DO THAT STYLE OF MUSIC!" he booms.

Despite his tender years you get the impression he is not to be fucked with. This time round he says he's going to have remixes done in house. "Why should I give £15,000 to some pillock in the States when I can get one of my boys to do it?" he laughs.

But both these remixes were fantastically popular. Ironically, Masters At Work's breakbeat funk take on 'Emergency On Planet Earth' was bigger with the acid jazz clubs than Jay's jazzy original, while Morales' housing up of 'Space Cowboy' was one of the enormo-house tunes of last year. (You couldn't go into a bar in Ibiza without hearing it.) A large number of Jay's audience wanted to dance to his beautiful tunes but found his grooves just weren't up to it. Indeed, according to Jay, his first two albums "didn't have a slice of boogie in them." With house remixes, you got the best of both worlds - the beautiful voice and something a bit beefier than Jamiroquai's often palsied funk.



Now Jay dismisses much of what he calls "conveyor belt house" but still feels a certain affinity with the sounds that pushed him into performing in the first place.

"Listen, I wouldn't be doing what I am doing now if it wasn't for going out and tripping off my face to house music," he says earnestly. "It gave me the inspiration to get on stage. I enjoyed those days and they made up a great part of me."

And despite what he says to the contrary, it looks like David Morales will be picking up remixing honours on the second single off his album, 'Cosmic Girl.' Indeed, Jay has deliberately kept some of the arrangements simple, to lend themselves more favourably to remixing.

"I've come to accept remixes as a necessary part of selling your music, like a video. But I've deliberately gone out to make sure that tracks on this," he says jabbing a finger at the CD in front of him, "are going to be easy. You'd have to be blind, deaf and mute to cock it up."

And there it is, the contradiction in his persona flashing up again. Half wayward swaggerpuss, half industry-savvy sophisticate. Not frightened to describe the new album as "product," he's not messing 'cos he's been through the record industry mill more than a few times. 'Do U Know Where You're Coming From?', the recent drum n' bass tune he did with M Beat which earlier this year reached Number 12 in the charts, was another example of what Jay describes as someone taking "libs".

The track didn't signal a violent change of direction for Jay, who, while he respects drum n' bass, reckons he's the wrong age to get into it big style. He recorded it on demo as a favour for a mate, but was then shocked to hear it played on Kiss FM off the demo tape. In fact, when he heard it, he freaked.

"What's that?" he acts out his astonishment. "It shit me up! It's a demo vocal! Now I was angry. Someone had put it out and forced me into a position where I didn't want to do it. Somebody had taken liberties!"

But people liked it so he recorded a proper version and it was released with some trepidation.

I thought, 'What are people going to think?' People who'd been into you for ages would think, 'What the fuck is this?' I didn't want people to think I'd jumped onto some jungle bandwagon. I don't think it came across that way. That's the last thing I'd want."

There's a sense of relief. Maybe he thought, "First the remixes and now this! Thankfully it turned out for the best." But you can't help thinking that with a voice like that, it could always turn out for the best for Jay.

'Travelling Without Moving,' Jamiroquai's new LP, was recorded at Great Linford Studios, a massive manor house near Milton Keynes, with a full sized football pitch out back. Each day Jay and the band got up, ate breakfast, then went straight into the studio. A game of football at lunchtime was followed by more studio sessions in the afternoon and evening, all a far cry from the disjointed sessions that comprised 'Return Of The Space Cowboy'.

As a result of these relatively calm working practices, and a more settled private life, the angst that permeated much of 'Cowboy..' has vanished, replaced by supa slick funk and sunny disco vibes. Prior to making 'Cowboy..' Jamiroquai had only three riffs in the bag, while this time they went into the studio with six or seven songs that were worked out with the three other band members on the ground floor of Jay's house. Despite being much happier ("two different guys, man," says Jay of his previous tension) Jay was still nervous. On the first day they walked in and banged out the effervescent 'High Times,' a song which documents his flirtation with a dissolute lifestyle, in the first take.

"I thought, 'This is alright, this is going to be alright,' which was such a relief."

'Virtual Insanity' is the first single to be taken off the album (and it will not be remixed). An elastic, Sunny Sunday morning excursion into pure joy, its snappy enthusiasm seems to contradict the edge of panic, futurist theme. Ask Jay about the lyrics and, characteristically, he goes right off on one.

"It's about putting piggies' hearts in people. If you fiddle about with the building blocks of life, we're going to pay for it somewhere down the line," he says, warming to his theme. "Once these things are created they're irreversible so we should be mindful of these scientists with these wonderful new ideas because they can lead us up shit creek and we already have HIV."

Then he spoils a perfectly reasonable argument with classic Jay-think.

"It's immoral to produce rat sperm from mice, so the family pet can have your baby."

Well, yes. Moving swiftly on, the rest of the album ranges from sweet balladeering like 'Spend A Lifetime,' to the disco-inflected 'Travelling Without Moving,' the paen to self belief 'Use The Force' and the good times, disco-happy 'Cosmic Girl,' of which Jay remarks "that's a single, or I'm Noel Gallagher." Then there's the single with M Beat, and, 'High Times,' one of the strongest tracks.

The production on 'Travelling...' is lush with strings and horns, the arrangements deceptively complicated, and the musicianship a definite step up from 'Return Of The Space Cowboy'. The Stevie Wonder, Earth Wind And Fire, Donald Byrd and O'Jays influences never overwhelm Jay's incredible voice, which has rarely sounded as full and confident.

"It's just funkier," reckons Jay, "In four years I'd say I've achieved the funk twice - 'Travelling Without Moving' and 'Alright' on this album. If I heard this in a club I'd go, 'Yeah!' This album was, 'Right, I'm going to start again. Life starts here.'"

Having toured for a year after 'Space Cowboy,' Jay reckons he's now willing to replace the occasional bouts of jazz noodling of yore with a catchy chorus. "I hadn't exploited that before," he says, again slipping into record exec-talk, "but now I was ready to exploit it full on. I wanted it to be an up album and it counts for a lot with the live shows. Something nice and simple."

Jay clearly knows a hook when he hears one, and his singing is incredible but lyrically, to these ears at least, 'Travelling Without Moving' is disappointing. It seems that after being stung for his political diatribes on his first album and having recovered from his angst-ridden (but emotionally compelling) second album, Jay has maintained a cool distance from the listener. With the exception of 'High Times,' the tracks range from exhortations of love in the traditional style, to socially aware, but no less remote, statements of political intent. Is he afraid of exposing himself in his lyrics, for fear of yet more ridicule? Is there less angst in there, because he thinks people will have a go at him, or worse still, try to understand him?

But isn't he reluctant to open up?

"You are right. Things are worded quite carefully so they don't give too much away. But there's also someone else in this whole equation who's got to benefit from all this and that's me. Sometimes I do know what you mean I am protecting myself, I mean, on 'High Times,' I'm not blurting out the names and addresses of my dealers am I? Learn from your mistakes, learn from your mistakes, dude."

"I want to take 1.5 million (album sales) up to 4.5 million so we're a proper British band who are serious contenders," says Jay, stubbing his spliff out in the ashtray before him, as the evening light begins to fade. "Then I can go to the States and do some floorwiping."

"I always see us as these underlings, at the moment it's Britpop, Britpop, Britpop. 'Jamiroquai? Oh jazzy stuff.' I want people to think - these boys do four or five million albums every go."

Jamiroquai are major players, but Jay is right, they do feel like underlings. Their scruffy clothes, their love of marijuana over cocaine (the everyman herbal high versus the sneering superstar's drug of choice) the confusion of social issues and good times - Jamiroquai are the popstars it's easy to like. They're just like you and me. Just a little bit cooler, maybe.

And Jay is a star. Sometimes his funk gets noodly, often it's so inoffensive you barely notice it, but you always notice him. The way he's not afraid to say what he thinks, whatever the crap he gets in return, the natural smile, the friendly self-assurance, the relaxed charm. He's not naff like Mick Hucknall, big headed like the Gallaghers or contrived like Jarvis Cocker. There's no chip on Jay's shoulder, so whether he's singing over a house beat, some tearing jungle, or managing to front out appearing on Channel 4's The Girly Show dressed only in his underpants as a favour to his model girlfriend, you can't begrudge him his success. It ain't easy being a popstar and staying cool - that's why there aren't many stars worth a damn. But Jay Kay is there, goddammit. Good luck to him.

**JK Interview #43 | The Guardian
August 23rd 1996**

"There Was No Plan" By Michael Odell

JK remembers some of his early jobs before he made it big and addresses the race issue in the music industry

"There was no plan. It's just when you're a teenager, you choose what you think is most hip and black culture was it"

Michael Odell

When Jason Kay was a skint teenage white soul boy, his mum booted him out of the Ealing homestead and told him to get a job, so the story goes. And, among the dead-end, minimum wage gigs he managed to hold down, there was one that caught his imagination- selling kilts.

'It was a shop called House of Scotland,' he says. 'Terrible job. Horrible fat yanks would come and say 'I'm from the McDougal clan, have you got the right kilt?' It was so ridiculous. Anyone who needs to prove their pathetic little insecurities with souvenirs of anything else is just sad. We're all people, all flesh, and we weren't meant to be kept in these little stereotypical boxes. Why do people feel they need to belong to a clan? The culture doesn't belong to anyone. You just grab what works for you.'

And Jamiroquai have done plenty of grabbing. Jamiroquai's new album (their third), Travelling Without Moving - an upbeat mix of funk, disco, jungle and even reggae - is the central plank in Jason Kay's informal campaign to 'Bring back the boogie!' which will kick off with a 'secret' gig at this weekend's Notting Hill Carnival.

The self-styled 'cat in the hat' - commonly known as 'Jay' - is back, and so is the argument about white soul boys. In 1992, when Jamiroquai's debut single When You Gonna Learn? first showcased his captivating falsetto, he personified an unwritten, perhaps dubious, Caucasion youth dream. In the age of hip-hop, when R&B; was starting to happen, no white soul boy wanted to believe that George Michael was as far as Caucasion cool could go. Surely, someone less mannered, more street, could update the role.

Enter Jason Kay, who had a sweet voice and a history which seemed to have the right mix of boho cred (his mother, Karen, was a jazz singer) and dues-paying struggle - Jay says he was formerly homeless and dealt in dope, to survive. (George Michael's father ran a Greek restaurant in Bushey, Hertfordshire.)

Jamiroquai were latecomers to the jazz/funk and sideburns scene, dubbed 'acid jazz,' which already included the Brand New Heavies (whom Kay initially tried to hijack) and the Young Disciples (the brother of the Young Disciples' Femi Tunji, became Jamiroquai's first manager. Jamiroquai's rise was meteoric: the debut album, Emergency on Planet Earth, went to number one, the second sold out, establishing them across Europe, going platinum in the process.

'Acid jazz was the Titanic,' says Jay today. 'A good thing to be on at first, but we had to get off before the whole thing went down.' But the real battle was race. Jamiroquai's success coincided with an era of commercial failure for many black British soul artists. Omar, Don-E and Courtney Buchanan were discovering that talent wasn't enough to make it; nevertheless Omar was among the first to be heard declaring Jamiroquai 'a genius.'

In the ensuing media debate over white soul's 'authenticity,' Jay was seen as anything from 'the new Stevie Wonder' to the 'new Elvis' (a thief of black music). Mention the words 'new,' 'Stevie' and 'Wonder' to Jason Kay today and he begins to talk with a fever, a clenched fist and a passion which is, well, kinda soulful.

'God! I got stitched up by some real bastards,' he says, writhing. 'Stevie Wonder is a hero. He's brilliant and there's no point me dreaming I'm ever going to be like him. I'd like to meet him and get him to do some of his old stuff instead of the crappy new stuff, but that's it. If he reads the papers here he probably already thinks 'Who's this cocky little shit who thinks he's me?'

'That whole argument over who owns soul was crap. 'You can't have soul if you're not really poor' - well don't kid yourself - all these things are relative. But what really hurt was that they compared me to Elvis - I hate Elvis!'

Jay loves a theory and the one about Scotsmen and their kilts is as good as any. Whether you cling to a sporran or soul music as a birthright in the culturally dislocated nineties, you are asking for trouble, he says. 'On the one hand, you've got the white people who think black people can only be sportsmen, musicians or drug dealers. That's crap, there are many eloquent lawyers who are black. On the other end of the scale you've got blacks who say 'I want to get back to my roots man.' Oh yeah? You wanna sit in the middle of a dusty field with a few seeds in your hand, do you? Then you can talk about being African and going back to your roots? Bullshit.'

But Jay is the only white hipster accused of being loaded down with cultural swag. Rob Gallagher who fronts the rap group Galliano says he has been asked the 'What are you doing making black music?' question once a week since the group started six years ago.

'The race question is always filtered through public personalities, I guess that's why musicians get asked. All I can say is that on one level, it's bollocks to say that only black people can record soul. But on another level you see the frustration - a black artist as talented as Jamiroquai will struggle and have no money while we make plenty. White artists still get more opportunities in the music industry and that's a microcosm for society.'

In 1988, George Michael walked off with the Best R&B; album Grammy for Faith. While factions of the American black music industry soul-searched ('How could the best soul album in the world be by a Greek guy?'), it has proved a beacon of credibility for all white soul boys.

Jason Kay says Michael's route to success, aiming himself at black radio, is the one his band will follow. There's every reason to: Travelling Without Moving fairly swaggers with funk. In fact, unconsciously, Jamiroquai are a more powerful testament to the power and influence of black culture than George Michael has ever been. Their language is the subtly Caribbeanised cockney adopted by a lot of white London youth (hot records are 'criss,' hot girls re 'fit' and when it's too hot outside they 'chip').

'I was influenced by hip-hop, graffiti, breaking and the street culture that went with it, says Jay. 'I could have got into drinking, indie rock and guitars but I didn't. There was no plan - it's just when you're a teenager you choose what you think is most hip, what works for you - and black culture was it.'

In the US Jamiroquai enjoy modest success and transcend the boundaries. It's a quirk of the racial conundrum that while the US industry exists in a state of apartheid, white Brit soulsters Jamiroquai and the Brand New Heavies (and George Michael and Lisa Stansfield before them) are given carte blanche from black America. 'It's worked in our favour,' says Jay.

In Philadelphia, we play to a 75 per cent black audience. Washington was 90 per cent black. A white American guy couldn't do what we do, he'd be slated. But because we're English they think we ride around in horses and carts. They think we have tea with the Queen, so they let us off! They're willing to give us the benefit of the doubt they wouldn't give their own. That's why I don't want this country to be like America - we should work at our racial integration, it would be terrible if I couldn't play jazz/funk or black music because I'm white.'

It would be sad, too, if he couldn't deliver his eco-rants without enjoying a burn in one of his collection of eight classic cars. Jamiroquai's carefree attitude to his own contradictions rankles with some. One moment he's telling you how hypo-allergenic skin cream, oven-ready chickens and genetic engineering are symptomatic of a society adrift from nature. The next he's enthusing over the potentially yokel-squishing thrill of 'doing 120mph through 'S' bends in the country.'

But this weekend white soul's best stab at cool will fire up Carnival. 'That's what it's all about,' he says. 'We want to see those people dance. When the music talks, none of this other stuff matters.'

Travelling Without Moving is released on September 9. Jamiroquai play the Kiss FM stage at Carnival 6pm on Monday.

**JK Interview #44 | International Herald Tribune
August 16th 1996**

"Britpop's Jamiroquai: A Band With Personality" By Mike Zwelin

A lengthy article about the music business and Jamiroquai's contract with Sony; provides a lot of history about the band

Just off the Eurostar from London, Jay Kay, a/k/a Jamiroquai, was scoffing a juicy steak with sauce bearnaise.

This British beef tourist - not beefy, he's rail-thin like the English rock star he is - was also here to promote a new record, "Travelling Without Moving." He answered questions in between chewing, swallowing and apologizing for it: "Sorry, but I've been thinking about this steak for weeks."

This is the same talented, energetic, talkative, opinionated and very lucky indeed Britpop star who, five years ago at the age of 22, signed an eight-album deal with Sony on the basis of only one previously completed track, "Space Cowboy."

"Emergency on Planet Earth," his first album, went platinum in several European countries. It looked like the investment would pay off. His second, however, "The Return of the Space Cowboy," went nowhere. The less said about it the better. He calls it sophomore jinx: "We were new at it. We'd been touring for six months and it was like 'Oh, boy, let's write a song about room service.'"

Never mind. He still had six to go. Eight - count 'em - eight albums. How did he manage to pull off such a deal? Exceptional talent, a hustle, a very smart or maybe desperate record company? It's like an eight-year pro contract for a college prospect: "The one thing I pat myself on the back for is my sense of timing. I had an overwhelming sense of synchronization, and I was really confident. I presented it like - 'I know this only one tune, but you can't afford to lose it to another record company.' Another reason it worked was that they saw I could stand up there and sing in front of a live band."

Record company bidding started when Jamiroquai attracted attention working clubs in the early 90s. He had the people up and dancing. At the time, Britpop, as the trades describe it, was, as he says, "dominated by faceless backroom boys and vocalists with personalities as disposable as their lyrics." Jamiroquai became the first in series of recent Britpop success stories - Suede, Blur, Oasis.

Jamiroquai the band includes four key man on salary. It's a price songwriter and lead singer Kay figures is worth paying in order for the band to develop and hold onto a full-blooded musical personality. Otherwise it's just a succession of rented session men playing an endless string of borrowed riffs. It's also a matter of being lonely at the top. He'd like to think he's part of an extended family: "A band has life of its own. Basically I'd rather be on the beach right now, but you've got to keep the momentum. It's like pushing a car up a hill. Once you get to the top, it starts going back down. But you have to know where to draw the line between family and work."

Derrick McKenzie, his drummer, who was there to help him promote, has a small daughter and although he tries to keep the two lives separate, he brings her to recording sessions when no babysitter is available. Kay jumped on the subject: "That's how I grew up. Backstage, being bounced up and down on musicians' knees."

His mother, Karen Kay, who has been in show business since the age of 14, was a singer and a dancer who did Barbra Streisand and Lena Horne impressions. She was in shows with big bands: "She could really center her notes. She sang with Ronnie Scott."

"My music is black-based. Being a white guy, the industry doesn't know what chart to put me on. That's one reason we've never been able to really break in the States. They have all these small-chart categories, we don't seem to fit any of them."

His style is a bluesy cauldron with criss-crossed melodies, James Brown-like horn hits and licks, African percussion, funk bass lines, and elements of hip hop, fusion, acid jazz, World Music and ragamuffin. But there was one serious problem - he sounded an awful lot like Stevie Wonder.

Kay bristles about that. It's a bristly business being accused of ripping off another artist; one you love. He has said that anybody with ears could tell that that's not true. But if you don't want to be compared

to Stevie Wonder (and you could do worse), don't name tunes "Music of the Mind" and "Use the Force" and sing Wonderful licks with frothy synthesized textures on top of a soul groove.

"Anyway, that's all changed now." He laughed, shrugging: "I just make sure never to listen to him anymore."

"Travelling Without Moving" was made in the tried-and-true trial-and-error rock record manner. They went into pre-production in November. By January they had the basic outline and moved into a studio in a manor house on a six-acre estate in Milton Keynes outside London. They lived there until they were finished in June.

A bit defensively, Kay says he takes the long-term view and would never hustle a record company for big recording budgets where you "lay around the swimming pool all day and hope somebody else gets the music done." For the first album, they went into a London studio every day like to the office.

Kay is a talker, a fidgeter, a blur verbally as well as physically. He said he took his stage name from jam (as in session) plus a misspelling of an American Indian tribe: "It has mystery in it. It's like ecological somehow. An Iroq could be a tree."

He was famous for wearing an outsized furry hat that looked vaguely native-something. He wore it all the time. There was a rumor that he was bald. Today, a hot day, his head was protected by a sort of working-class cap that made him look like a longshoreman on a lunch break. He ordered a Bloody Mary to go with the steak. He excused himself again for having talked while eating.

"We can't eat steak in England these days, you see," he explained. "It's crazy. That's what happens when you start feeding cows themselves. What did they expect? You can't monkey with the basic building blocks of life."

"Virtual Insanity," the album's first single, to be released Aug. 20, is about genetics. One of the lines goes: "Things are big that should be small." He said, "It was a subject I wanted to get off my chest. I have a lot of subjects on my chest."

JK Interview #45 | Rough Guides August 1996

A brief history of Jamiroquai

The most successful act to have sprung from the British acid jazz scene, Jamiroquai take their name from the pseudonym of their creator, Jason Kay, who retitled himself after a Native American tribe. His first record deal was with the very label which gave the scene its name - Acid Jazz Records - and he typified its sound perfectly. His vocal style was reminiscent of Stevie Wonder (a comparison which was to dog him for years), his music was funky and often ran to lengthy instrumental jams, and his preferred recording style was live, with the minimum of overdubs and technology.

"When You Gonna Learn?," the debut single, was released in October 1992 and reached #52 before dipping out of the charts, only to re-enter some four months later. Although it failed to become a sizable hit, the song - a soulful plea to world governments to see common sense - gained Jamiroquai a great deal of attention.

It became clear at this point that, in addition to his talent as a singer, Jason had two qualities which would help him out along the road to stardom: a big hat and a big mouth. The hat changed from time to time, but it was always so wide and fat that it seemed to dominate his entire body. (On the silhouette logo which would feature on his later

releases, it would even sprout horns.) His mouth, meanwhile, would spout forth at the slightest excuse about anything under the sun - in particular politics, injustice and ecology. He was brash, he was loud, and he was sometimes naive, but he was always entertaining.

*Spotting the potential for large-scale pop stardom, Sony offered him a deal, which he accepted. His first single for the major label, "Too Young To Die," was released in March 1993, reached #12 and stayed in the charts for six weeks. Three months later, after one further single ("Blow Your Mind"), Jamiroquai released the debut album, *Emergency On Planet Earth*. While much acid jazz up to this point had seemed like tepid 70s pastiche, this LP had the feel, the drive and the warmth of a funk classic.*

Not that he'd done it alone, of course: a wide range of musicians had added the essential ingredients, such as electric Rhodes piano, Latinesque percussion, even horn lines that could have come straight off a Steely Dan album. Jason's favourite instrument, however, seemed to be the didgeridoo, featured on a couple of tracks here, including the self-explanatory "Didgin' Out." True to character, he gave the whole of the aboriginal nation a sleeve credit.

*Two more minor hits followed the album's release: its title track and a re-recorded version of "When You Gonna Learn?." Then it was all quiet for twelve months, as preparations were made for the follow-up, *Return Of The Space Cowboy* (1994), for which Jason honed down his collaborators to a tight, regular band, including Stuart Zender (bass), Toby Smith (keyboards) and Wallis Buchanan ('didgeridoo and good vibes'). Although the songs' themes had broadened a little - from straightforward love and politics to more complex themes like brokenheartedness and smoking narcotics - musically it was very much business as usual. Not that anyone seemed to mind, as the first two singles to be taken from it, "Space Cowboy" and "Half The Man," both went Top 20 in the UK. The only dissenters, in fact, seemed to be the US authorities, who took offence at the explicit drug references in "Space Cowboy," and demanded that a new video be made for the song which replaced phrases such as 'at the speed of cheeba' and 'get high' with more innocuous sentiments, and blurred out the marijuana motifs clearly visible throughout.*

JK Interview #46 | Dotmusic

July 15th 1996

"Crucial Third Album Displays Tighter Sound" By Tony Farsides

A sneak preview of Travelling Without Moving with JK



It's always an event when you're the first person outside the record company and band to hear an artist's new album. But the anticipation was tempered somewhat when dotmusic turned up at Jay Kay's

London mews flat for an early airing of the third Jamiroquai album to be informed that, due to technical difficulties, the only available place to actually listen to a tape is in Kaye's vintage Mercedes parked outside.

So, for more than an hour, the two of us sit in the rain, listening to the new Jamiroquai album, Travelling Without Moving, and observing the comings and goings at the neighbouring business, which, according to Kay, "designs Christmas cards or something like that."

Kay's enthusiasm for this new LP is evident from the second the play button is pressed. He sings along, doing his own backing vocals, in between explaining the intricacies of a high-hat or a string section. In fact, being talked through the album by Kay is virtually a show in itself. "I think it's what the first album should have been, both songwise and soundwise. It's got closer to the music I want to do," he says.

Indeed, the progress that the band have made since the days of their first hits such as When You Gonna Learn and We're Too Young To Die and the first LP, 1993's Emergency On Planet Earth, is evident from even the most casual listen to new material like Virtual Insanity, High Times and especially the reggaefied Drifting Along.

The group used to attempt to emulate the Seventies funk, jazz and soul musicians they loved by imbuing their music with lots of energy to counteract their lack of technical proficiency. Now, however, Kay's ultimate fantasy of having a razor sharp music machine along the lines of Seventies jazz funk outfits like Earth Wind & Fire looks less of a dream as the band has tightened up in every area.

To this end, the other group members - bassist Stewart [sic] Zender, drummer Derrick Mackenzie and guitarist Simon Kitz - have their contributions recognised by receiving a share in the publishing credits alongside the group's core songwriting team Kay and keyboard player Toby Smith, "They have to be getting something out of this," says Kay, "It can't be like, 'I'm alright sitting in my Mercedes, so sod you.'"

The Jamiroquai camp seems a lot happier and stable than it was around the time of the group's second album, 1994's Return Of The Space Cowboy'. Although far from a failure, with more than a million sales worldwide, it lacked out-and-out pop hits and didn't yet have the polish and sophistication evident on the new album to make up for it. "On the last one, we were convincing ourselves that things were fine when they obviously weren't. We had a new drummer and were going straight into a big studio without really having done much groundwork," says Kay. "On this one, the reason why we've been able to go up a gear is that we've had our own pre-production time in my studio, just working things out with drums and bass. So, we've actually got to the proper studio with things part finished rather than panicking."

A useful prelude to the release of the title Travelling Without Moving has been the recent success of Jamiroquai's one-off collaboration with east London jungle producer M Beat on the single Do You Know Where You're Coming From, which reached number 12 in June. The collaboration was initiated by Guy Moot at EMI Music, who publishes both artists and believes the success of the project is evidence of the versatility of Jamiroquai's talent. He says, "The main thing about Jay is the way he phrases his vocals and how Toby's keyboards work around that. That's what makes them work and that can essentially translate to many different styles."

While there are obvious singles on the new set, namely Virtual Insanity and Cosmic Girl, they are much more subtle than the band's first big hits. Indeed, a criticism often levelled at Jamiroquai is that, since

their first album, they've displayed a tendency to over-complicate their material and, in the process, dilute their radio and chart appeal.

Kay says, "We're always being told, 'can you take some of that out because the public like something nice and simple'. But things remain conformist unless you try to push those barriers a bit more. People should be given a little more and maybe that will force us all into making better quality music." His views are matched by the group's record label, Sony S2. The group's marketing, for instance, has always been geared well away from the mainstream pop audience. "Quality's the key with Jamiroquai," says Mark Richardson, S2's head of marketing. "It's as much about what you don't do as what you actually do. If, at the time of the first album, we'd had him on the cover of Smash Hits, it would have put him in with a wrong audience who wouldn't have stuck with him. But marketing is not too important, because Jay's so obviously talented."

The graphics on the group's forthcoming album will incorporate the group's long-running cartoon JK logo in with a visual which shamelessly mimics the Ferrari crest, playing on Kay's love of cars. The European launch of Travelling Without Moving has also been tied into the Italian Grand Prix where the group will be performing a special concert.

Finally, Jay pops the eject button on the tape machine and declares himself happy, "I think we have our own corner and we like that. I want people to understand you learn as you go along," he says.

**JK Interview #47 | Cosmic World
1996**

"JK Interview" By Cosmic World/Student Press

JK talks about music, life, and the new album



What 'Travelling Without Moving' is about?

"It's all about making cars hover as opposed to going forward on two wheels with an internal combustion engine. Cars could hover off the forces that are already there, the earth's magnetic forces or some other kind of force. Finding technical ways to balance our technology and nature. Put the two together and make the world a better place. Put the silly religious quibbles and racial quibbles aside and try and teach our children."



Hype Hype Hype

There's an excitement around the album, which is great and there's something there that I thought would fizzle out but hasn't fizzled out and it's come back stronger than ever before. And that's really reassuring and that's where I feel that I've kept my side of the bargain as an artist. I'm going to do as much as I can and I'm going to do the best music of my ability, as much as time and life will let me. And keep this thing going and it's gonna work, it's gonna bloody work! You're not going to see Jamiroquai stop, not at least until that one tune that everyone's waiting for. Till that comes it's not gonna stop. Sorry!

From that period of being away, I've grown up as well. People can forget about what you were like and what went on then, because suddenly you're back again. It wasn't like we were so big-in-your-face that people thought, 'Oh, you'll always be that to me'. Cos you can go, "OK, what was I, then?" And nobody's quite sure and yet you're still around. It's like being one of those artists that's always around, always selling records, always doing well, popular but never in your face. When you do get something that comes along like a Top 5 hit, it works its way up progressively and that's great. I hope this doesn't sound mechanical but this is such a cut-throat business that you've got to engineer where you're going."

On the infamous Morales remixes

There were some parts of the Morales mix of 'Space Cowboy' that I didn't like. When it starts getting to the repeated, uh uh-uh-uh, uh-uh-uh, uh-uh bits. Oooh nooo! But, let's be honest, the mix did really well. A lot of people thought it was the best thing since sliced bread. So it was only fair to let the man have another go with 'Cosmic Girl'. And I didn't mind that time because I've done my own mixes. It's when people say, 'Hey, love your mixes' and I go, "Nothing to do with me, mate". If I'm going to put something out now I want to give the public something extra, something that makes it worth buying the single. Because I know damn well people will go, 'Pah! Buy the single? Might as well buy the album!'. So I want to include something different, not just another remix but something like we've done with 'Cosmic Girl'. The Quasar Mix of 'Cosmic Girl' is the first time I've

done a remix, mainly because I've never had time before. But you know I could make mincemeat out of some of that stuff that's around. In fact, somebody's asked us to do a remix of a Junior Vasquez track. Imagine that! Why would they want us to do that? The Quasar mix reminds me of the early 80s, tail end of disco. Streetsounds era. It's quite timeless really.



On clubbing & dancing

It gets difficult sometimes. You know, 'There's that wanker from Jamiroquai'. And I want to go to a club where they're playing disco and funk. I want to get down, I don't want to be disturbed. But we all have to get out sometimes. Then you get the people who come up and say, 'I'd love to do a tune with you'. Of course you would. But you've got to go and find it for yourself. It's not my problem. When I'm in a club I just want to get down and boogie. I mean, that's what started me off doing music - dancing in clubs. When I go to a club and boogie that transfers to the stage, that keeps me inspired, keeps me in practice. In the videos like the one for "Virtual Insanity" I don't rehearse the movements. I mean there are certain places that I have to be at a certain point in the filming, what line I had to stop on to make it work. But it just clicks and when I watch it back I know it's worked.'



Songs & party music

"People always want to hear songs. Songs are what people relate to. When people go out and want to get wrecked, drunk, on the pull, go out to a club, dance, they listen to club music. In the daytime y'know, sometimes it's nice to be pulled away. I often think of these people that go to these hardcore trance do's, and I think that Jamiroquai is one of those bands that you listen to when you get home from a heavy trance do. Y'know, when they're tripping out of their minds, they listen to something like 'Digital Vibrations' and it's perfect. Mind you, I

was listening to A Guy Called Gerald the other day and that's just sorted. Some of the old stuff, Detroit techno is wicked and you see where it all came from. I mean, I was out there when acid house was being acidic and believe you me, many a headache was had. There was some good scuff, but now I think my head just can't take it. I need some good party music."

Why the current club scene will never last

"I've always said that the club scene will never last because it's cold. From the time they started lining people up in huge warehouses and all the rest of it, dogs and big security guards punching you in the face for breathing and nicking your puff and all crap like that. When it started getting like that, I just said, see ya! That's not what going out is all about. But people still do it They've got no imagination and that's why I haven't gone out to clubs in a way. Until someone comes up with a club with a proper chill out area, properly worked out where you can easily get a drink, where you can sit around and there's nice bits of dancefloor and everything's been well thought out and the lighting's nice and there's fans to keep everyone cool; all these little details that make the difference to a club. And no formulaic music: 'Oh, it worked last week, so we'll play it again this week'. No, no, there's got to be more imagination than this."

On current music and artists

"I show a worrying disinterest in anyone else's music, except the stuff I like which is mainly old stuff I can honestly say I haven't listened to anything contemporary for quite some time, but it's because I don't want to get ideas from what they've done. I don't want to sit around going, cor that's a good idea, how do I do that? Cos you could easily get away with that. You could easily do a contemporary, Bjork type album. But that's not the vibe, you concentrate on your own thing."

On politics

"If you don't fit in directly to the opinions you've made then you're seen as politically incorrect. If a guy from Greenpeace goes to a conference in Australia, he doesn't get there by boat, he flies. But it's seen as politically incorrect. I mean, this is the modern world, he's not going to walk. When I'm ready to think that I can make an influence in the world, to make the world a better place in some way, I shall do so. Just because I own a car doesn't mean to say that I think there should be more roads built in Britain. I don't want to see any more roads, I want to preserve nature. I don't want to be in a traffic jam. I don't run the country, I'm just one of 60 million people in the country. It's not just me that kills the world. All I want to see is some common sense in the world"

On the public opinion of Jay

"I'm not trying to be a bad influence on people, I'm just giving some of my opinions. Just listen to the music we do. I'm a fairly ordinary person really. I just make a living from this because I've got an alright voice and I've put some alright pieces of music together. But to be honest the alright pieces of music that we do get together are a good bit better than the shit that you hear out there"

When and where were you born?

Stretford, just up the road from the Manchester United ground. I was born on December 30, 1969, at the end of the end. It was at the end of the decade and a decade of change at that. I was an identical twin, but my brother died when he was six weeks old because he had terminal brain damage. It broke my poor mum's heart. But then again, can you imagine two of us?

Maybe you are the two of you?

That is actually something which has crossed my mind. I've often thought about how things are happening for me. If I want something to go a certain way, it generally does. After getting a deal, for example, I knew my debut album was going to get to Number One. Sure enough, it did. And I've kind of saved my own life a few times. I've always had that, it's almost as if someone is looking out for me. It sounds dumb, but I always think it is because there were two of us. One of us went, but it's somehow like someone is still attached to me. It's almost as if I am living the life of the two."

What was your childhood like?

I didn't come from a rich family. My mum, Karen Kay, the Seventies jazz singer, worked her ass off to give me what she could. She should have had the success which I'm getting. She pretty much brought me up on her own and, during the first few months of my life, we went to Nigeria and then Las Vegas, where she did three shows a night, the last one finishing at Five in the morning."

Where did you call home?

Nowhere. We just went from place to place to place. I remember being woken up in the middle of the night by my mum saying, 'Come on, we're going now'. She didn't have much choice, though. More often than not, it was because she couldn't afford to pay the rent."

What about school?

I ended up at a school in Leicestershire. I was there for around a year and a half. It was the longest period I was anywhere. Each time, I'd bounce into the next school, and they'd be like, 'Oh, here's the new guy', and I'd be like, 'Yeah, but I'm the funny guy, the one who will be at the back of the class making a noise'. You have to make your own space and barge your way through."

Do you have conflicts?

All the time. Even with myself. For instance, I went through agony wondering if I should base the "Travelling Without Moving" album around the motorcar. I love speed, you see. I was a bit worried about what people would say bearing in mind that the first album was about the environment. Then I thought, 'Well, hold on a minute, just because I love to drive a fast car, that doesn't mean I believe in chopping trees down. It doesn't mean I think they should build more roads for my car'. The bottom line is I will open doors for old ladies."

Do people insult you?

All the time. I was recently interviewed by this German journalist who told me the lyrics on the new album were crap. I bounced off that, but this same guy called me a dictator in the studio. I said to him, 'I'm a dictator, am I? Stop the tape and get out!'"

Do you feel under attack?

I've gone past the point of having to justify myself to anybody. I tell people, You try picking up the paper and reading a load of shit about yourself. See how you feel. I'm not going to deny myself things which I've wanted since I was a kid. At least I've had the courage and the conviction to go for what I want."

How has the world altered your personality?

I've been shat on by so many people that my instinct now is to be very suspicious. I didn't used to be like that, though. I used to be really open, but people used that to tread on me. I changed when I was 21. I was just sick of everyone taking liberties with me."

Do your neighbours know who you are?

Yeah, people stand underneath my window and shout, 'Jamiroquai is a wanker'. What's worrying is these are professional guys. It's really scary to think they're probably doctors."

Have you ever believed in any sort of conventional religion?

No, siree! I follow the religion of the trees and the greenery. I follow the religion of the moon. I believe in what people leave behind them in the sense of trails and spirits, the energy which they project. I believe in vibrations, which is what the whole world runs on."

What do you think of power?

You use it to make someone jump, but it should be the right person. Not the guy making tea down the studio, but the wanky record company executive "

How do you think other people see you?

I step on toes real easily. I don't just step in shit, I sit and roll around in it."

What are your future ambitions?

I want to find a little place in the country, somewhere with a studio and fields out the back where I can keep a few goats and chickens. I would really enjoy the simple lifestyle. There's also the other side of me, the one which drives a Lamborghini and a Ferrari, but I'm not actually Mr SuperSlick. My bedroom is not full of designer suits. I guess it is down to those different characters of mine once again."



Jamiroquai Interview For Student Press

Interviewer : To what extent do you think that claiming to be a Jamiroquai fan is as much a lifestyle statement as a musical one?

Jay: I don't know about our lifestyle. I know in America, everybody says to me 'Hey, you know, people get into Jamiroquai because of the lifestyle - it's a lifestyle, man'. I don't think we have a particular lifestyle and I don't think people see enough of our lifestyle. Our lifestyle is much like anybody else's, I would have thought. We go out when we've done our work, get drunk and high, and unfortunately the reality is that simple. Obviously, we have access to a bit more dough than your average man in the street, but that just means that you can go on holiday, when you've got the time, and have a really good holiday.

Interviewer : Do you think that people who have similar lifestyles follow you or are you setting the trend?

Jay: I think people are into the common sense of Jamiroquai, in some senses, like we haven't sold out. I don't think we've sold out, and I think people see that over a period of time, and they respect that, and they realise we don't really want to be poppy popstars, we just want to do some good music, and nudge people. Lyrically, sometimes I want to nudge people, like 'Virtual Insanity'. Because we are the future, we are the new generation, the fact is that some of the students are going to run the country, they are going to make the decisions, they are going to run their local council, and I think we need to have common sense prevail, and that's why I write the Lyrics I do. The things that piss me off, I write about, and hopefully it nudges people. Like 'Virtual Insanity' is about the onslaught of genetics, DNA - fiddling around with blocks of human nature, and then it's a statement about how we eat our food, where our food comes from, how it's produced - food technology. Why is an apple not an apple? - 'cause it's three times as big as it should be. Hopefully, some of the people who listen to our music, take a Lyric, and think yeah, I've never really thought about it like that, as they get older may well be in a position to change things.

Interviewer: Since recording Return of the Space Cowboy, music - particularly dance music - has undergone huge developments. How difficult was it to record Travelling Without Moving in the light of this?

Jay: Good question. It was easy, 'cause, y' know, the old story, when 10 people walk one way the eleventh person has only got to walk the other way to be different. What I see in clubs and music is there's no fun. Drum n' bass, o.k. ? Drum 'n' bass has overtaken for young people what acid house was to me and us lot. Y' know, go out, get off your face and everything; but drum n' bass is dark at the end of the day. You're never going to have a really good time, like boogie down or just be able to sit at the bar, have a drink and listen to the tunes. Consequently, Brit pop. Well, you can't dance to that. I mean you can sort of swagger about pissed, but you can't actually boogie to it.



The best is Funk - that Disco kind of vibe. Feel-good factor. That's what's missing. And I knew I wanted to do that this time around. We wanted to put more boogie factor into the music anyway, 'cause I think in the past we'd do the live gigs - and remember when you're on the stage, you're not hearing it out there - and people would say, 'Yeah that was funky, that was great: but it wasn't really, it was sort of jazzy, but it kind of hadn't quite worked out Remember with 'Space Cowboy' we had a month after coming off the tour of the first album straight into the studio. Consequently we're in a £1000 a day studio, no pre-production. I mean the first bit that comes along, if there's a good drum beat it's, "we'll 'ave that thank you", and let's put the bass on that. The I think from having a gap, 'Space Cowboy' got lost in all that. Brit Pop was coming and all the rest, but I'm determined not to see this type of music just get swallowed up, just because the industry is only into Brit Pop and people can only hear in one ear. Because there is a huge gap, still, and the trouble is, everyone has lost direction, and I think that throws back to when we all sat doing loads of fucking drugs, in fields. I mean honestly, there's a lack of direction, 'cause everybody's been there. "Ecstasy, isn't it great la-de-da", and then there's a big comedown in young people terms on a national scale. So they think, 'O.K., what do we do now?' Everyone's looked around for the alternative and obviously you can't keep going out to clubs and getting off your face. So what replaces that? I mean I know I can go out and listen to Disco and have a drink and have a boogie and it can lie on the ear - it's still songs and it's still funky, and this is what we're getting round to. That's what songs used to be. Sister Sledge, whatever, the list goes on and on. But clubs ain't like that no more. It's either really dark, or the DJ's

don't really know where they're coming from, or what they're doing, or it's all hip hop all night and they're all fucking staring at each other. It's like, Fuck Off. I didn't come here to be stared at, just get on with it and boogie.

I think we have progressed in our songs, but the sound's still the same and that's what people liked in the first place. Y' know, that will always stay as long as we play...

Interviewer: The new album is a lot more concise and structured in the way it's presented. Space Cowboy was more freeflow - jamming it up.

Jay: We didn't do that badly off that one. I don't think people understand how difficult and frustrating it is, and how much work we put into our albums. Y' know, a lot of fucking work. We're not the people to walk out and leave it to the producer, we're there 'til 5 or 6 in the morning and up the next day. And I think that's 'cause we care about the product we're delivering to the public. I mean, I care very much. Even on the last one, I still cared and I knew we hadn't quite cut it, but it's one of those things when you have such a big boost off the first one. The second album was there solely to keep the name there because it's like a swinging pendulum - if it stops, it's ever so hard to get it pushing again and going again and people can forget about you. Some other little twit can come along and fuck it up, and the next minute you're out of a job. We need that long to recuperate. It's like the fallow on a field - you gotta leave it every four years to let it just recuperate.

*The other thing is, when you've toured around the world, what do you write about - hotels and room service?
Hotels. room service and bird's knickers!*

Stuart: That's a good title mate!

Interviewer : Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. Which provided the greatest inspiration for the new album?

Jay: None of them. Speed. Extreme speed. No, not the white powder you get off people who are too thin. Students won't like this, but I happen to drive a Ferrari. Mmm, that's an extremely fast car. I mean, I'm a speed freak, I love speed - always have done. When I was a kid I used to hang on the outside of my mum's door at 70 mph, and hang outside the car, shouting 'Faster mum, faster'. Mums don't fucking do that with their kids. Amazing. We used to call ourselves Husky and Crutch. Mmm. what the fuck am I talking to you about that for?

Anyway, I went out with my mate and we went out in my car and took a couple of 30mph corners at about 90 like you do, and he said 'Wow' this is like travelling without moving and I thought, 'Travelling without moving' describes what we're doing now right now. The earth is spinning on an axis at 1000mph Travelling without moving is what we're doing socially because the world is still full of war and we sit there, 'Ooh Natural Timotei' and 'Ooh Butter that you can spread', - Fuck off! There are people who can't fucking eat. I think we should get off our little trip here, living our little life on this island. Things are wrong, things are wrong in the world.

Also, Travelling Without Moving is a pointer towards what we're going to do about transport in the future because to me, transport is one of the few freedoms that people have. I mean if you want to go to Scotland tomorrow and explore the highlands, what's the quickest way for you to get there? Get on the M1 and up you go. Unfortunately I love travelling, I love that speed but I wanna see a time when we start developing here some kind of alternative transport system. I'm not talking about inner cities 'cause we should block cars there altogether. We should be able to get to the outside of a city, park the car where everybody can take a little electric buggy or something else, some other kind of power - 'travelling without moving', no wheels, hovering. The technology is all there to be had and I see a world that's got to balance itself out between technology used in the right way to help people's quality of life, and technology that's used to make scientists famous and think that they're wonderful, when in fact they wreak absolute havoc on everything.

I hate to say it, I walk out in the street and see people who are mentally ill and with nowhere to live and it's fucking appalling. The point is, I live in conflict 'cause now I've worked for five years, got a nice fucking car and drive by, and I used to be there. I was there on that fucking street on a fucking skateboard with not much to go on, not much to live for except trying to carve a living out. Suddenly you think 'Christ, this chasm has appeared between us and yet I don't want that chasm, I don't wanna walk down the street and see people like that. I wanna see this country get its' act together and do something. We lack leadership.

Arena "I wanted it to be that this third LP kicked in and set the precedents for the ones to come. This would be the baseline to show we're perfectly capable of making decent music and now it's a question of taking it even further. My mission is still to bring back funk and disco. To make that music great again."

"It might sound cliched, but music and cars have always gone together," he explains. "People in this industry need an outlet. Because when you're making music doing exactly what you want to do - then what else can you do after that? You can't just go off and take a break in the hills and wash your face in springs - all that crap. You have to turn to that adrenalin rush, which is the next best thing to being on stage. Hooking up third in a Diablo and tickling the brakes as you come into that little blind left-hander with the five tractors and someone's combine harvester on the other side..."

"We fought like absolute dogs to do this (ITV's Formula One theme tune)," says Jay. "We've been up against everything, especially timewise. Because when you get to the stage we're at now, there's soooo many things that

you say no to. And you say no for a reason... you hope that something better will come along. But then this, on top of the whole Ferrari thing for the album. God, it's just so good." And for once he's almost speechless.

JK Interview #48 | Streetsound

January 10th 1996

"JK Interview" By Paul E. Lopes

JK talks about the music biz and his own maturation as a person and artist

Do you feel you would be a different person if you'd grown up in New York instead of London?

I think I do. I think everyone's a bit snappier, a bit faster here in New York. There's no doubt about that.

A lot of people fantasize or romanticize about the development of things in the ghetto, but who really wants to put up with that struggle?

I totally agree. People don't realize, people do see things from the outside, and feel they want to be part of it, but boy, if you were part of it, you wouldn't want to know, and it wouldn't be like that. Let me put that in terms of myself. When I was 17,18, I thought, hey, real cool music, wow, I'll be able to do this and this and this and this, and then you're 24, and you're in your music and you're doing that shit, and all of a sudden, all those things you thought you were going to do, party this and party that, and groove on, you're not doing. You fight for a long time to get the cake, and by the time you get the cake, you're just about to stuff it in your mouth and you drop it. I think that the whole thing has become contrived. Maybe I've got this wrong, but from my angle, we sit watching MTV at home. I see, particularly, black music portrayed in two ways, I see the four black guys dressed up to be good preppie white boys, and then there's Gangsta Hip Hop.

There's the two images that we're getting all the time. And I'm thinkin', who's putting those images out, who's running the industry? Hmm. Mr. Big White Record Industry Man. I come into this building here, and I just look up. There's a sign out there, and it says, like, "Columbia, Black Music Department--Upstairs".

What, some of your band members made a left and some made a right when you got to the building, is that how it worked?

Exactly. No, I think I ended up in the ventilator shaft. I was in between the two floors. And I was asking a stray rat, excuse me, do you know what department I'm in in this record company? No, but I mean, seriously! I find that disappointing. I find it sad for people like me who have to come over and, somehow, have to run this gauntlet of mistrust. I've got no desire. And people are saying, when're you going to crack it in America? Do I want to fuckin' crack it here? Am I fuckin' interested? I don't mean to be derogatory, you know, I'm just, you know, I'm trying.

Have you calmed down of late?

Do I sound like I've calmed down? A little bit. The point is this, I suppose you do calm down. You realize that some of your visions you're not going to make in a year. I felt sick of keeping trying to justify myself, about what I'd written about in the first album, and the fact that people want me to go out there and stop people clubbing seals. I'm a recording artist, and I'm trying to use that as my voice. I got so sick of justifying myself to people who were saying, what do you do for the environment? And I'm thinking, you know, you cheeky bastards. They're saying, you're just in it for the money and to be popular. Yeah, well, how come I did a video called "When Are You Going To Learn" that they banned on MTV? You know, that was strong.

How's your clothing line going?

It's slow. But, we're trying. To make the stuff I want to do, which basically is stuff that will last, that is simple, that anybody can wear, and that is a little bit timeless so people who haven't got big patches on it all over it, and you know, says, "Hi, I like Jamiroquai!" Just a little buffalo man. I feel like the logo, as I go on, means a lot. It means a different thing to every person, I can't fully explain what it means to me, but I think that logo is the inner side of somebody or the animal side of you or the more connected side.

Is that sort of the reason for the album cover's being so minimal?

Yeah, yeah. Absolutely. Well, you know, the idea behind it was always that, shit, if I took the name Jamiroquai away and gave you a blank, white piece of paper with--donk!--you know, a buffalo man stamped in the middle, that would say it. For a period of time, people don't need to see the name. you don't need to tell them what things are about, they'll make up their own minds and hopefully, fourth or fifth album, people will know what we're aiming at.

JK Interview #49 | High Times Magazine

September 1995

"High On Jamiroquai" By Grey Casseus

A short interview about censorship in America and the legalization of marijuana



*Jamiroquai's debut album, 1993's **Emergency on Planet Earth**, was an ecologically-minded, almost hippie-dippy maiden voyage. While still formative, its grooves left no doubt about the band's inspiration: the '70s jazz -funk of Stevie Wonder, Herbie Hancock, Roy Ayers, Donald Byrd and Earth, Wind & Fire. Lead singer Jay Kay wore a Dr. Seuss hat and wrote lyrics that were definitely green. Amid massive hype, it became a huge international hit and built a cult following in the US.*

*The follow-up, **Return of the Space Cowboy**, released late last year in UK (Jamiroquai's homeland) and only recently here, is a dramatic improvement, one of the most musically alive sophomore albums in recent memory. "Just Another Story" opens with an admission of Kay's drug-dealing days in London ("Pushin' that draw like you're superfly"), and by the time the title track rolls around at the end ("With the speed of cheeba/You and I go deeper/Maybe I'll have to get high to get by"), the first album is a distant memory.*

Censorship seems to dog Jamiroquai (pronounced Jam-ear-oh-kwhy) wherever they go. MTV refused to air "When You Gonna Learn," off the first album, apparently deeming its eco-political slant unsuitable, and is predictably keeping its distance from the current "Space Cowboy" video, which shows Kay and the band prancing around an apartment with walls occasionally illuminated by fluorescent pot leaves. (Look for it on The Box.) And England's Radio One won't touch the bouyant second single, "Light Years." "They'll play techno like the Prodigy, but 'Light Years' is 'too hard,'" he gags. "Can you believe that?"

Then there's the sequencing issue. The US version of the album moves "Just Another Story" to the end and replaces it with the mellower title track. "I chose that original sequence to give the album a certain flow," Kay says. "They [Work/Columbia Records] fucked it up, plus they added a live version of 'Light Years.' I don't understand it."

Despite these frequent run-ins with those who would alter his artistic vision, and his reputation as something of a control freak, Kay is an upbeat soul man who lives and breathes funky music and good bud. "The trick," he says, "is to write tunes that people recognize from the first few seconds. By the way, has anybody got a spliff?"

His request reminds me of the show at New York's Supper Club late in 1993 when Kay blew a joint passed to the stage by this writer. After exhaling, he signaled the band into "Blow Your Mind." This time we're rolling fatties at the HIGH TIMES photo session. As Jamiroquai's "The Kids" percolates in the background, the thoroughly baked Kay comments: "Hey man, let's try and bring back good, old, fresh and earthy Jamaican weed and not rely too tough on that hydroponic, indoor grown [stuff]. I wanna see a return to earthy weed. What's happened to the smugglers? That weed is the one, the fucking one. Brilliant, tasty, earthy. This chronic shit, I can only go so far with it. Burns my throat."

**JK Interview #50 | VIBE Magazine
May 1995**

"Still Funky And Soul-Searching" By Aidin Vaziri

A short feature article in which JK defends his commitment to social reform



Despite claims to the contrary, Jason ("Jay" or "Jamiroquai") Kay-- frontman for the group Jamiroquai-- insists he's not an angry young man. Nor is he trying to be Stevie Wonder. And no, his big, furry buffalo hat is not used for interplanetary communication. In fact the mere mention of these things sends the 25-year-old, Popsicle-stick-figured soul man into a blur of finger snapping while sandwich particles fly from his mouth.

"Can't one person out there see it for what it is?" he laments, barely keeping his sentences from overlapping. "It's just music. I'm not trying to be a fucking acid jazz hero or the troubadour of social conscience in the world. I just want to make some fucking music. That's it. And hopefully try to get a message across with it. It's just, like, 'Wake up, wake up!'"

Emergency on Planet Earth, Jamiroquai's 1993 debut, was a lush, groove-laden affair, packed with marvelous melodies and miles of soul-drenched crooning. But critics were quick to dis the group because of Kay's environmental activist tirades, his slight vocal resemblance to Mr. Wonder, and of course, that hat. The origin of the group's name was kinda dumb too: It's a combination of jam, as in funky music, and Iroquois, as in the tribe of Native Americans. But it was hard to discredit the sheer disco sunshine of songs like "When You Gonna Learn" and "Too Young to Die," or a vibe that recalls some of Earth, Wind & Fire's, Roy Ayers's, and Marvin Gaye's finest moments.

"The whole point of the music is expressing your inner thoughts," Kay says. "How am I supposed to keep people from clubbing baby seals and keep the record company happy at the same time? You know, you can't do all these things at once. I don't have to justify it-- I've had enough of trying to prove things to people."

He still refuses to succumb to his detractors. The funky-to-the-hilt and unbearably bodacious Return of the Space Cowboy, the group's second album, is an absolute stormer. It maintains the momentum set by the debut, all the while still charting a new course for the cat in the hat. Just listen to the sweet, soaring chorus of "Stillness in Time," the liquid bass line of "Half the Man," and the assured soul bite of "Light Years," and you might conclude that Jay Kay is quite possibly the most misunderstood man in show business.

"My angle has always been, Without a good voice, how do you get through to lots of different people?" he says. "If I didn't do music, I couldn't do a tune and get my point across to a million, 2 million people. A poor man cannot help a poor man."

**JK Interview #51 | The Face
November 1994**

"Lost In Space" By Andrew Smith

"From pop success to bitter backlash, the fame game has taken its toll on JK. Now he says he's both wised up and more mature. But has the self-styled Space Cowboy come back to earth or is he still too high?"



Jay Kay shouldn't really be telling me shit like this. He and his band for - make no mistake, it is his band - have been working hard lately. Last Friday, they finished their second album. On Sunday, they filmed the video for the first single. On Monday, they were due to leave for a week's much-needed vacation in a shared Majorcan villa. Trouble is, this is the record company conference season, when all the major players gather their foot-soldiers together for a day or two of back-slapping and vigorous shaking of hands. Crucial to the success of these jamborees is a liberal sprinkling of stars. Jay, being currently one of Sony's biggest, was expected to attend. He didn't want to go, but the pressure was intense. In the end, Sony agreed to send a helicopter to ferry the Jamiroquai party to Torquay.

It must have been quite a do. Manager Kevin and drummer Derek [sic] gleefully describe how they went outside for a fag, then watched in astonishment as a fleet of limos rolled up, whereupon a small army of men in dark suits and shades leapt out and spent several minutes casing the area, lest a sniper be hiding behind a bush or something. Had Bill Clinton turned up unexpectedly? No. Eventually Mariah Carey stepped out and floated across the pavement into the building.

"Yeah," laughs Jay, "it was basically a homage to Mariah Carey and her husband Tommy Mottola [Sony president and chief executive officer]. At one point, I thought she was going to go into the 'God' bit. We had enough of that with a certain artist at the Brits: I just remember this guy going up, sniffing profusely - you know, 'I'd like to thank God...' and Columbia, and the little people who pick the leaves! These things are so funny. Mariah was going, 'And I couldn't do it without all you guys in England, you all worked so hard for me!' Like, so that I can cruise up in a V-12 Merc and eat one course of lunch and then bugger off!" Jay laughs louder. "And I thought I wanted to give her one."

He always goes and spoils it, doesn't he? But the band had a good time, watching artists such as Cyndi Lauper present awards to the company tennis and fly-fishing champions, raucously cheering performances by Michael Ball et al, generally behaving, well, as a band should. What fun. Until, that is, the celebrations had ended and Jay and co found that their helicopter had flown away, to be replaced by a scrappy little minibus, which smelt as though someone had puked in it. The road to megastardom is not necessarily a bed of roses. No one knows this better than JK.

It's easy to see why Sony wasn't keen to let Jamiroquai be excused from the conference. It's been less than two years since their first single, "When You Gonna Learn" was released on the Acid Jazz label. To a club hardcore beginning to choke on an enforced diet of unmitigated house and still loath to accept techno as an alternative, its fizzing, popping basslines, snatched beats and razor-sharp horn patterns tasted sweet. Sweetest of all, though, was the singer's agile, ardent voice, which sounded to most like a female Stevie Wonder. It turned out, of course, to be a boy, a cocky 22-year-old Londoner named Jay Kay. If he could talk it like he walked it, was the consensus, he was going to be big.

By the following June (1993), Jay Kay was big. His maiden album, "Emergency On Planet Earth", had gone straight into the charts at number one, and he was being hailed as Britain's latest potentially huge star talent. But if Jay had been, in the words of one music writer, "a pop star waiting to happen", he was also a backlash waiting to happen. He was accused of plagiarism specifically, of wantonly ripping off Stevie Wonder of musical colonialism (this argument, that he was cynically benefiting from the suffering of past generations of black artists, got progressively more preposterous as it unfolded over the months) and of political naivety, or, worse, insincerity, in his harping on about environmental issues. Meanwhile, more astute critics pointed to the generic quality of the band's music, to the reverence it displayed towards its soul, funk and fusion sources: people like Wonder, Donald Byrd, Roy Ayers, Gil Scott Heron, Earth Wind And Fire. You could almost plot its every move on a

graph. The songwriting hadn't matured enough to have acquired a flavour of its own. The lyrics seemed like well-meant nonsense Jay Kay, through all his dozens of interviews, did little to dispel this impression. And he wore silly hats. More than one interviewer left readers with the clear understanding that Mr K was little more than a gauche, jumped-up fool.



The reply to all this, "Return Of The Space Cowboy", has been six months in the making. The reverence is still there, along with the accompanying impression that Jay would benefit from surrounding himself with musicians prepared to push him harder, but a subtle evolution has taken place. The writing especially on tunes like the killer opening shot, "Just Another Story" and the infectiously breezy "Stillness In Time", is more accomplished: the arrangements are generally tighter and less amorphous, and Jay is slightly less inclined to resort to vocal gymnastics and pointless scats when he's not sure where a melody is leading him. Additionally, many of the lyrics betray an explicitly personal content. There's still no baring of souls - Jay's not ready for that, going out of his way to maintain a certain detachment, a coolness that's a million miles away from much of the soul he so admires. Nevertheless, it's far more satisfying than the vague, utopian generalisations of yore.

Some of the subterfuge, then, has been stripped away. "Return Of the Space Cowboy" is not the best album Jay is capable of making (though it could very well be the best album this incarnation of Jamiroquai will make), but it's a first, tentative step forward. Is JK, as he's somewhat deferentially known in the Jamiroquai camp, growing up?

We've made it to the villa near Formentor on the northern tip of Majorca and Jay's not here. He's gone for a spin in his swish black '72 BMW having preferred it to his new Aston Martin DB8 on this occasion. Jay likes motoring and, by all accounts, is something of a psycho behind the wheel. ("It was a terrible trip down," he will say later. "We ran out of petrol in Barcelona and weren't sure what they call 4-star in Spain..." - he means unleaded, surely - "...then we fell asleep and got locked in a ferry car park. I took much longer than when I went to Rimini one time, but then the weather was better and I was doing 140 to 150 most of the time.") Suddenly, there is a rumbling in the distance, a throaty roar that gets louder until, finally, the BM pulls up and JK leaps out, all grins

and fingerpopping. "Sorry, I forgot about you," he says, though you get the impression that he's improvising here. Trying to hold down a conversation with Jay Kay is every bit as bizarre and frustrating an experience as it's reputed to be. He talks loudly, at a dizzy rate of knots, never finishes a sentence, never answers a question directly. Trains of thought twist and meander into all sorts of bewildering shapes, often culminating in fits of giggling or a burst of song. Sometimes he'll jump up and start dancing or pacing around the little porch. After five minutes, you find yourself wondering whether this is the result of an instinctive caginess, born of his days as a smalltime drug dealer and hustler (this shady past is confirmed by people who've known him - it's not all colourful myth-making). Except that, just as the thought has entered your head, he'll go and lay some gargantuan indiscretion on you. Perhaps his brain has simply gone a toke too far, been fried like an egg under a blowtorch.

Then again, maybe he's a boy who's been forced to grow up too fast, who's been indulged too much. "The thing you have to remember about Jay," suggests one old mate, "is that for the last 18 months, every day has been his birthday." There are, of course, alternative explanations. "I think he's a little bit mad, actually," says another associate, with the utmost earnestness. I can't make up my mind. As the interview progresses, this confusion becomes more and more pronounced, a fact not unrelated to his increasingly, er, enlightened and mellow state. At the end of the encounter, I'm not quite sure what's been said, or indeed if anything very much has been said at all. One thing I do know is that I'm not looking forward to transcribing the tape. When God created Jay Kay, he didn't have journalists in mind.

The "Space Cowboy", Jay - this wouldn't be someone you know, would it? "Ah, I knew we'd get around to him." He laughs a high-pitched, mock-sinister laugh. His accent is a surprise, very well spoken Southern English, not the wide-boy drawl one had been led to expect. "The Space Cowboy is just an analogy for getting high. The Space Cowboy is that little voice inside of you that gets you going."

Is he a good guy? Has the Space Cowboy got... "Horns?" Yes. "It could relate to the fact that I've spent a good portion of the last six months stoned, and now I'm coming back."

Was that a positive thing? "Yeah, sure. It's a bit of a haze, that period. But it's generally an analogy for good times. In a literal sense, though, I have been a space cowboy." Were you trying to escape something, or avoid having to deal with something? Jay rises, starts laughing again, but now the laugh sounds forced. He's uncomfortable with the implications of this question. He was expecting a pat on the back. For a brief moment, it looks as though he's going to take serious offence. "OK, yeah. Avoiding... like, having to do music. Like being me, which makes life harder than it needs to be." Then he's off on a tangent again, miming the angular beat to "Just Another Story" and saying something about the importance of LSD to his music this time around, which I can't quite follow.

Jay was born near Blackburn at the end of 1969. He was one half of a pair of identical twins, but his brother died at the age of six weeks, after which he was raised as an only child. ("It's weird feeling a connection with something that is now dead, but was connected to you," he muses, rather touchingly.) His father, whom he never knew, was Portuguese. The band were originally going to take their holiday in the Algarve, and Jay had thought he might try and contact his dad while he was there. He hasn't made up his mind whether he wants to or not. "If my mind wants it to happen, then it'll happen when the time is right," he says. Mrs Kay was a jazz singer and Jay credits her with having furnished him with the ability and drive necessary to have built his own career.



Was the decision to get a bit more personal on some of the new songs a conscious one? "Yeah, when it came to the lyrics, I thought, 'I have got to be brave.' The stuff on the first album didn't apply any more, I'd had far too much grief and personal battering in the meantime to carry on in the same way. Anyway, we'd been working solidly since the last one came out, there was nothing else to write about. I had to say to myself, 'Write about those struggles that you're having at this moment as opposed to shying away from it all and hiding behind the words.' The thing is, when you do that, you're always afraid you'll be misunderstood and then when people criticise the music, they'll really be criticising you as well. You see, last year, I was being asked about what I'd written all the time and I'm not an orator. I can't stand up and say, 'We shouldn't do this, we shouldn't do that.'"

Isn't that exactly what you were doing on "Emergency On Planet Earth", though? Songwriters often seem to resort to politics when they've got nothing of their own to say, when they're backing off from themselves. What's the point of a song whose lyrics could be spoken, straight out, as part of a conversation in a pub? Don't great songs, like great poems, gain their power from communicating insights that can't easily be expressed in plain, everyday language? Even if it's just a different angle on feeling good.

"I agree. But when I was younger, 16 or 17, I used to sit around lecturing people all the time. 'Think about this, think about that, it's terrible, we've got to do something.' After a while people would go, 'I don't want to hear about that any more, it's depressing: we're young we want to live and that's that.' It would start to diminish your confidence in the things you believed in. You'd be afraid to say anything important, because people would think you were a boring little shit. I'd be, like, 'No, I think we should talk about things like this.' But after a while, you lose the habit of talking about them, which is a shame, because it's a good habit, talking about things that people don't want to talk about. So I talked about them on that album. I couldn't say that stuff in a pub or club."

What have you learned from the struggles of last year, and from the hostility you've had to deal with along the way? "I'm sure I've learned a lot from it. What, exactly, I couldn't tell you. I'm refusing to talk about the race issue this year, about the idea that I'm not allowed to make the music I do because I'm white and haven't suffered enough, for one. The criticism didn't bother me." It didn't? There's a long pause. "But, then, it did in some ways, just because so much of it was such nonsense. I was amazed rather than outraged. Where did people get these ideas? They were stupid. And when you considered the situation, you realised that it was just not fair. Just not fair. I mean, I'm not having anybody over. I never said I was the best. I just wanna get on with it, really.

I'm a singer, for fuck's sake, a guy who goes onstage. That's all. I felt like saying, 'What do you want to know about me?' I've got nothing, really, to tell you. And people would come along with this misconception that I'm a cocky bastard and that was also unfair."

You're not a cocky bastard? "Of course I am at times, but I don't like to think of it as cocky. That's just my drive. I'm not a cut diamond. I've got a lot of rough edges. The crap's there, thick droves of it and I'm not hiding it. People can't tell what you go through. People can't tell why, when they ask me for my autograph, I won't give them one, not because I don't like them, but because I can't understand what they want it for. People don't understand the conflicts that enter your life, the guilt trips about success and having money and shit. After a while, they do get to you a little, but when people were being critical of me, I was, like, 'Yeah, but I thought of that ages ago. Tell me something I don't know.' In the end, I thought, 'Fuck it, fuck it, fuck it! I'll just believe in myself."

Jay is almost spluttering with what appears to be a combination of anger and pain and righteous indignation. That stuff did hurt. Are you ever prey to self-doubt, Jay? "No, I think I've got an intrinsic fear of losing, that's all. I don't mean losing a game of cards. I mean losing out on the whole process of life, of being frustrated by life and left behind."

He gets up again, starts singing along with the music that's wafting through the doors from inside the villa. Embarrassingly enough, it's Stevie Wonder. Is it the fear that drives him? "Probably. I think it comes from being an only child, having only a mother and really no one else. I have no blood relations apart from her." Why's that? "My mum was adopted at six. Her mum died when she was that age, as a result of multiple sclerosis. She was looking after her mum, who was in a wheelchair, from the age of four. She's a worker, my mum. So I have this thing about work, about doing things right.

"I followed mum around a lot when she was a singer. It was always, like, 'It's only you, son. You've got to do it yourself.' I wanna make some ground. My mum's been fucked over by various things in life. She's very talented and has worked really hard and not got what she deserved and I want to make sure I get it." Are you close to each other? "Yeah, we're very close. I went through that phase where I was always angry with her, where she got ripped apart, really ripped apart. It's difficult: I'm Capricorn and she's Cancer. Then we got back together. I think she started to see what I was doing. The last gig we did at the Brixton Academy was the first of mine she's been to." Were you proud? "Oh, absolutely, because I was showing my mum what I did. For a long time, she had my back up, you know, when we started to do well. I was so excited and she showed no feelings about it at all. I was, like, 'Come on, I'm doing my thing now be pleased!' She only stayed for three numbers, then she was gone. I quite admired her for that, we have that kind of relationship. I just want her to be proud. There was a time when I don't think she was. That hurt. You know it did."



Whether this is where it comes from or not, the drive Jay summons from somewhere is awesome and, if you happen to be in his band, no doubt a little intimidating. When he talks about the producer who was sent packing early on, or about Nick Van Gelder, the drummer who has since been replaced, there is no mercy in his voice.

"Nick's focus and attitude weren't right. He was filling all the space, you can hear it on the last album... everything was rushed... it's as simple as that."

Jay is a perfectionist, prone to bouts of impetuosity, and known to be difficult to work with. The record contract is reported to be in his name, the other musicians operating as paid session musicians. They may be sacked at any time. This must make for an insecure working environment, one where people are reluctant to criticise or disagree. The last year has undoubtedly hardened Jay.

"I do want to see compassion. I do want to see people get a fair deal," he says. "I don't want to see people try to take it all like greedy bastards. I'm not like that. I'm not an unfair man and I'm not a greedy man. I won't cut my own throat, though, because others are trying to cut my throat all the time and it's taken this long to get some friends around me who are trustworthy." People are trying to cut your throat? "Yeah, from the word go. You know, when I'd written a song and I'd play it to someone and they'd be going, 'Yeah, right' and take it off the machine like it was a piece of shit. It'd be like, 'Ouch that hurt!' Then my wall goes up. This business is pretty fucking horrible. You have to be ruthless at times with people."

I notice that, even on the new album, you don't seem to write about relationships. "That's 'cause I don't really get many going."

Why, is it a question of time? "In a way. It's a question of maybe not being able to put the commitment in that I'd like to. It's just a complication that I don't really need in my life." Have you tried relationships? "Oh, yeah." Did

you find that they... "Made me behave in ways I didn't really want to? Yes. As a bit of a wanker, really. I'd try to put girls off, I began to realise, because I wanted to do my own thing."

Are you sure that's what it was? Astonishment. "Yeah, yeah. It's a cling factor that cannot occur. I cannot operate properly like that, because I feel I have an obligation. Be nice. Not that I'm not nice. But to me, to have somebody with me, it's a different kind of niceness I want to show. I don't want to show average niceness, because that would be... average. If I'm going to get down with someone, then I'm going to get down with them. I'll know when that happens, because it'll just go 'click'."

Just like that? "Yeah. You see, I never take for granted that I'm going to be around at 60). I may not last that long. That may be why you're getting a chance now, being allowed to do what you want now. You best get as much out of now as you can."

At this point, the door to the porch swings open and more music wafts into the (by now) night air. This time, it's Donald Byrd. Ayo, the two-and-a-half-year-old son of Jamiroquai's manager, Kevin, toddles out and comes to sit on Jay's knee. He likes Jay, especially when he sings to him. With Ayo' Jay has nothing to prove. He goes inside and plays football with the child. He seems happier there.

**JK Interview #52 | Vox
November 1994
"Drugstore Cowboy"**

"Jamiroquai's Jason Kay rolls another spliff- his second 'big fatty'- and introduces himself: 'My name is Bong... James Bong.' The hip and tripping Space Cowboy of his youth is back; he's skinned up, chilled out and ready to face the music industry..."



Jamiroquai's Jason Kay rolls another spliff- his second "big fatty"- and introduces himself: "My name is Bong... James Bong." The hip and tripping Space Cowboy of his youth is back; he's skinned up, chilled out and ready to face the music industry...

'Space Cowboy' came from being mashed, and dawdling around the house one day, humming a tune. It's the feeling that it carries with it, that's what I wanted to get across. I just remember a really nice day on Hampstead Heath. There were a lot of people sat there, we had a game of football and a few spliffs and it was good. The Space Cowboy is that vibe you can find within yourself, where you go: 'Oh yeah' and you open out a bit. I like the idea of a Space Cowboy alter ego. He's psychedelic. He's a character. He's a representation of times earlier, before I was doing music, when I was off my face and tripping, funk'd out in some hat and getting down. I was at my peak. I was in my late teens and I was on it, I was just on it. It was like my little training ground.



It's different for every person. You can overdo it. Every time somebody said: 'Come on, do another pill,' I'd say: '~No, it's alright man, I'm quite happy chugging along as I am.' You know, because I was saving myself. All this tripping and E-ing is all great fun, but I just see it as a close-up of how wicked life is. Life can be that wicked all the time. Like a woman I heard at Glastonbury; she said: 'We can be like this all the time.' But at some stage you need to learn how to engineer those feelings when you're real. All those things that you get tripping, all that purity, you can have that through your natural person, your natural vibe. I needed to go through that period. There are people who ride through, who say: 'I am going to fucking well do what I said I was going to do when I was high,' and stuff. I am one of those people. There are others who give up on their ideas when reality sets in. E has that side to it. Perhaps that's the scarm. It's all part of a very slow process of conditioning. The government almost lets this stuff go on, so that minds are dulled and people lose their aspirations. All they care about is the 'club lifestyle'. But, then, what else is on offer? Slowly the screws are being turned with things like the Criminal Justice Bill, more taxes being pulled out of thin air.



I went through a time when I was dealing and living on the streets. I don't think I gave a shit about Space Cowboys when I was living in my hut. Or Cowgirls. I was skint. I didn't give a shit. My mates were bringing me bananas and oranges in the morning. It was a hard life out there. This was part of a period, spread throughout a few years, of general decline. So the Space Cowboy isn't about real life. It's a fantasy really. I just thought, wouldn't it be nice to go on Top Of The Pops and shout 'Cheeba, Cheeba'? Then we'd all be laughing, wouldn't we? We'd be halfway to being able to carry a 16th in our pocket.

It should be legalised, of course. Absolutely. Tax it, do what you like, but we want to be able to smoke it as and whe nwe like. Except, of course, while operating farm machinery. I am campaigning by smoking it. I've just had two big fatties for the bloody photo shoot.

I don't think all drugs should be legalised. It's not going to work. The whole point is that we should be able to improve the quality of people's lives by, one small example, letting them smoke a spliff when they get home at night. Why not? If people were legally allowed to learn how to smoke a joint, then that would be a spiritual

victory. And just by improving the quality of people's lives, they won't need those other drugs, will they? The only reason people are taking these things is to run away, and there's so much beauty in life and so many positive things to do.



I'm a free person. I don't want to be told what to do. I can't handle it. This year has definitely been the hardest thing I've been through. People have been blurting about second-album syndrome and suddenly you realise that you're standing in the graveyard of a million bands. I started having paranoia attacks. I woke up one day, sat up and blurted out: 'The evocal on 'Just Another Story' is too loud!' I was tired. I still am. I haven't had a holiday or anything. The Nazis tell me to start again. Things build up. That's what I'm going through.

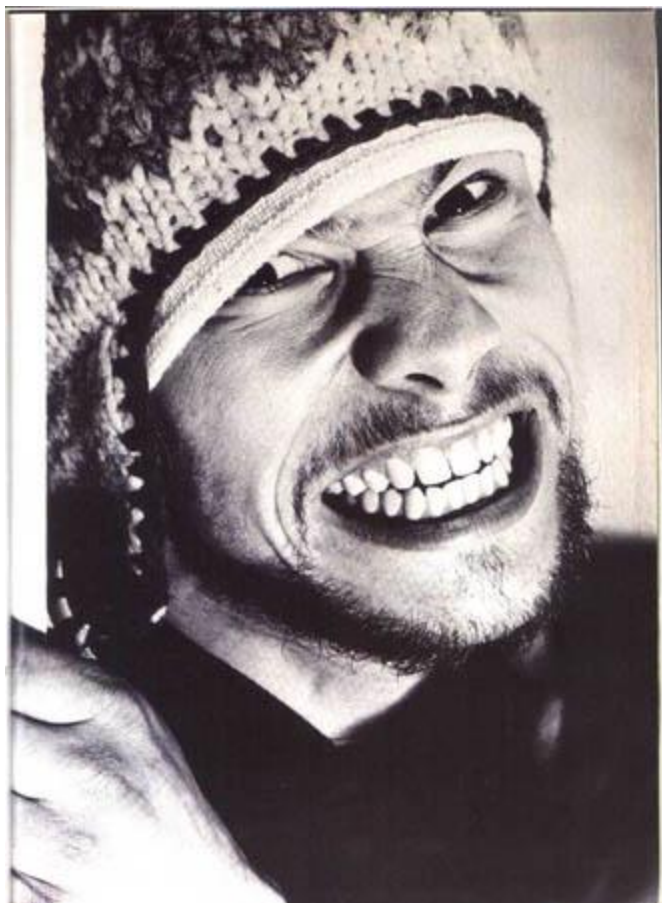
It's a horrible thing when you're portrayed as someone who is a Jack-the-lad. I suppose I am an angst person. I think I'm just a bit forward and passionate about things, so I just let off. Why not? Who cares? Smoking helps me to cope with that. I don't pour myself a G&T; at the end of a hard day's work, I smoke a joint.

JK Interview #53 | Vox

July 1994

“What's Your Problem? Jay Kay”

"Jason Kay spouts off on being 'Stupid, White and Dumb' and stealing black music for his own."



JAMIROQUAI's 24-year-old Jason Kay (aka Jay Kay) was brought up in Ealing, West London, by his jazz-singer mother, Karen Kay. Inspired by the likes of Sly Stone, Roy Ayers and Gil Scott-Heron, he formed his now successful jazz-funk band.

*In late 1992, their debut single, 'When You Gonna Learn?', a one-off on the Acid Jazz label, was enough to persuade Sony to offer Jay an eight-album deal. Jamiroquai's first major-label single, 'Too Young To Die', went Top Ten and, last summer, the album *Emergency on Planet Earth* entered the UK charts at Number One. At the time, Jay was dogged by accusations that he's had an easy ride to the top because of his colour, a white guy leaning on a black sound.*

*Jamiroquai are currently completing work on their 12-track, double-album follow-up, *The Return of the Space Cowboy*.*

"A lot of people reckon I want to be black, and that I'm trying to sound like a black singer, which is such a load of old cobblers. I sing like my mum, like myself, the only way I can. I've never looked to anyone, black or white, and tried to sound like them. But I get accused of it all the time, and it's a fuckin' pain in the arse.

What bugs me is that black people don't get slagged off when it's the other way around. Snoop Doggy Dogg's used pretty much the whole of Parliament and Funkadelic. He doesn't get slagged for that. Why not? Because

he's black. Journalists sit in front of him and think: He's a rapper, I can't slag him too much. Let's slag the whitey instead.

So my songs are derivative of black music, are they? Get it through your skull, buddy boy -so were The Beatles, so were the fuckin' Rolling Stones. You name it. There's only so many chords. If I played you Stevie Wonder's 'Pasttime Paradise', would you tell me it's derivative of white music because it's got violins and classical bits in it? That CNN poster, "Young, Stupid and White" -I never even saw it. I thought it was a fuckin great title for a tune though. If I called a song that, I could have a dig at the sort of people who write that silliness in the first place and also relate it to the rise of fascism. They're the characters I'd call young, white and stupid. I thought it'd be satirical, but I've realised in the past year that I shouldn't lower myself to these people's bloody levels of having a go. I can't be bothered.

Why am I stupid then, because I'm white? Hmm, I'm sure the five black folk employed by Jamiroquai would agree. I always get the impression that the people who write these things are white themselves. They're actually the ones who wanna be black, wanna be street-cred. Like being black automatically makes you street-cred. Does it? You must be getting fooled. You think that all the best dancers are black? You don't even know. Break-dancing, popping, hip-hop. That's Hispanic. Puerto-Rican roots. And black roots as well. Don't kid yourself. Have yuu listened to our backing tracks? It's South American, Latin. It's not fuckin black at all. I've never heard so much crap in my life.

Alot of white kids wanna rap and be black cos they think they'll look harder like that. They think they'll be "in the crew". It's exposure to MTV and that sort of shit. You get all this yo-in' and ho-in' and bitchin' and mother-fuckin'. Great word that, motherfuckin', isn't it? Just bridges a space in the music, always fits nicely. No I don't use it. I find it unnecessary. There're lots of better ways to express yourself. You don't get more respect for it either. More black people than white people come up to me and say: "Wicked music, man. Like it, great lyrics." I went to Dalston the other day and about six people stopped me in a 400-yard stretch of road, all really enthusiastic. I've even been stopped by guys with dreadlocks.

Journalists were so nice at the start and then it all went horribly wrong. The Stevie Wonder thing came out of nowhere and has been going since. All because one guy said I sounded a bit like him. From then on, I was supposed to be the wanker who based his whole career on Stevie Wonder. I was the guy who got an easy ride just because I was white. People who say that are fuckin' idiots who don't know what they're talking about. They're not me, they don't know what I've done. I had to go out and do all sorts of wierd and wonderful, dangerous things to get my start. I had to break the law and be a fuckin' little criminal. I didn't wanaa do those things. It certainly wasn't easy.

The problem is that the press conjure up this image of who you should be and try to make you fit into it. They can't make me fit and so they slag me off. They don't know what it's like trying to keep a leash on something that can easily run away. I only have to walk out the studio for one hour and what I left behind as a potential Marvin Gaye's bloody 'I Want You' has become fuckin' Mr Blobby. I have to be careful all the time. I don't need all this Stevie Wonder shit. I've got better things to think about. Sure, I'm big-mouthed Jay who's got a big fuckin' gob. But so what?

I came up with this tune the other day, but when we played it, it turned into 'Don't You Worry 'Bout A Thing'. I wouldn't keep anything like that. What people misunderstand is that my key, tune and register just happen to be similar to Stevie Wonder's. It's not just that I sing like him or even sound like him. It's just that we go for the same notes. I could sing most Stevie Wonder tunes comfortably. Big deal. What are you trying to say? Tha no one's ever going to sound anything like Stevie did again? It's 50 years or whatever since the guy was born. You

think that someone else might come along who likes doing that music well? Probably. There's only five billion of us on the planet."

JK Interview #54 | Daily Mirror

February 15th 1994

"Out Of The Squat, Up To The Stars" By Rick Sky

"Jason Kay recounts his rise from sleeping rough to becoming a popstar"

Five years ago singer Jason Kay was living on the streets of London, and staying in squats.

Today the lead singer of Britain's brightest newcomers Jamiroquai, is one of the most talked about faces on the scene. His rise to stardom has been spectacular.

He signed a breathtaking eight-record deal with music giants Sony, his band's debut album, Emergency on Planet Earth, rocketed to number one, and they were nominated for five Brit awards- more than any other act in the history of the awards.

Jason refuses to let his fame and fortune affect him. He says: "I really resent all the trappings that go with being a celebrity. All that gloss and superficiality can't distract from the problems that exist for everybody.

"My days of living rough have, I hope, kept me down-to-earth and made me realise how hard life can really be for some people."

Jason found himself homeless after a bust up with his mother, jazz singer Karen Kay.

He says: "It was a very depressing experience.

"I was living with people who had no hope, no future and were at the bottom of the scrap heap.

"A home is everyone's basic right."

JK Interview #55 | Mixmag Magazine

December 1993

"Mouthy Geezer" By David Davies

"Jamiroquai's JK is well cheesed off. He's united the nation under one funky groove and all he's got for his trouble is right royal slaggings. His Emergency On Planet Earth LP has been flying out of the shops all year but regularly when he's met the Press it's ended in disaster. Blagging full backstage access to the band's tour in Japan, David Davies and photographer Mark McNulty tackled the world's fastest-talking angry young man."

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Thursday afternoon in Tokyo and the cat is without his hat. He looks more like a boxer, Calvin's peeking out in Marky Mark style, brown neck length hair swinging, shirt off and his hard, wiry body glowing with sweat. It's the third gig tonight at Shibuya On Air, a perfect concrete box amid the expensive chrome sheen of Tokyo's sleek shopping heart. Outside the first traces of Typhoon Ed are bringing early darkness to this city of multi-coloured neon. Inside Jamiroquai are sound checking in full charge. All ten of them focussed on the front man. And he's going for it.

Dancing, leaping. No more than three people are watching. On stage, they are putting it all into "Do That Dance," one of three new songs. A fierce little number it is. Jay launches from the stage, singing, trying to turn a cartwheel, standing on his head, landing on his head, springing up and catching the lyrics before they hit the ground. Climbing up on the security barriers. He's on top of it all. Sweating hard and the music rushing through him. He's on it. Suddenly he stops mid-song, the band stopping neatly, almost instantly. Quickly the brass section is re-arranged, they try it again. Again he stops, makes his suggestions and they go again. They've found an extra 2% and this time it clicks even better. The song rushes on, Jay winding up the vocals real tight, balancing and walking along the top of the barriers. It reaches its ending peak, Jay pushes it hard until the final word. And then he roars, loud as he can, just the one word. "Wanker!"

Jason. Jay. JK. Which ever name you prefer, he is the year's new dance dream. Spunky, mouthy and quite happy to strip his shirt off. The man to finally take the promise of all things Acid Jazz and flip them right over into glorious, succulent pop. The man that has done what a whole string of hopefuls never achieved. Omar, Galliano, Incognito, Brand New Heavies, Talkin Loud even. Taken cool, funky, danceable jazzy grooves, fed in his own quite incredible charge of a voice, mixed in a stiff measure of attitude and emerged with a silk purse of pop success. Talking loud and saying something. Emergency On Planet Earth. And generally getting slaughtered by the critics for his troubles. Read that press; bitchy slaggings in the NME, heavily-qualified damning praise in The Face and you soon find JK: Mouthy Geezer. Spouting off about everything and anything. And his own words, ranted out at a million miles a second, selected carefully and printed later with all the hypocrisy skillfully pointed out.

The good ship Jay has been taking broadsides from every side. He does, though, ask for it. Killed by his own words. His mouth racing, his opinions spilling out faster than very much forethought. A rude, angry, erupting torrent it is. And it's all over the place. He contradicts himself constantly, slip up after slip up. Not though that doesn't know this is what has fed his critics. "I just see," he says, "all the journalists sitting there thinking, 'Great. [It's] Jamiroquai, he's bound to fucking fluff up, open his mouth.'" But still it's not stopping him ranting away like a true bar room trooper. "That mouthy geezer down the pub," as even he puts it. Getting into a lather about speed humps and Americans and the population explosion and McDonalds and jail sentences for people who neglect their animals and petty bureaucrats... There is plenty more. Easy meat he is then for a hack.

Take this. This is a slice of JK's logic in full flow. Ranting, talking as fast as he can, rapidly changing sounds in his voice of conviction, anger and the almost triumphant satisfaction of 'proving' his point. "Too many people in this world think they're fucking smart," he opines. "And none of us are that smart and no man is really that much smarter than another man. It doesn't matter what school you went to, how much you educated yourself. It doesn't matter if you went to Eton, Cambridge and then Oxford and got a PhD. If you're stuck in the middle of the fucking Sahara desert with no water you're going to need to speak to a bloody nomad and can you speak bloody Moroccan? No! So you're not bloody clever!" This is the sound of someone hungry for the taste of winning the argument. And it's for ranting like this as much as anything that he's been damned, and often, it has to be said, by journalists with very similar such tastes.

It's merely a process though, a cruel little initiation ceremony that most new pop stars find themselves grinding through. A brief passage on the media learning curve. Jason seems quite clearly to have learnt this lesson. He

knows full well it's his own words that have been used to shoot him down. "I've decided," he says, "the best option is not to rise to the bait. To keep my mouth shut." He pauses. "I don't know though," he says quietly, thoughtfully, "that I've learnt to do that." And he is still fighting. Bullied by the NME, attacked as naive and a mere Stevie Wonder-copyist, he's not licked his wounds and come back wiser and craftier. No.

In Tokyo the music talks. A nationwide tour sold out months ago, with immaculate girls loitering all day long outside both the band's hotel and the venues. Beautiful, polite girls. "Japanese women," reports Toby, "are unbelievable. They sort you out and afterwards they fold up your clothes and say, 'Thank you'. Respect!" Gifts rain down. Bassist and part-time male model Stewart [sic] Zender is thrown a home-made tour jacket, complete with the Jamiroquai Buffalo Man logo perfectly added to the back. Jay himself is showered in presents, not least a £200 Japanese doll from one bewitched front row admirer, almost half-naked in desire with her shirt wide open. And Jamiroquai know how to enjoy themselves. Jay delays the soundcheck one afternoon for biological research purposes, as he puts it. "I've been throwing some spunk around since I've been here," he says later. He seems surprised at such Japanese enthusiasm.

Jay is 23. He's from Ealing in West London, his mum was a jazz singer and he avoids talking about his father. His past seems to be kept deliberately hazy but appears to have involved a heavy skateboard commitment (hence the scars on his face) and an equally strong commitment to selling dope at some point. "I've always been a bit of a all-or-nothing kind of chap," he says. "Knocking out hash, I suppose that was all or nothing. I think I've always been like that. I like to go for it, I don't really like pussy-footing around." His commitment now is clearly just as fervent. Wallis, the didgeridoo ace, can remember Jay when they were skateboarding in similar circles. Slowly they drifted apart, although both hung around West London's warehouse party posses like Shake & Finger Pop and Family Funktion that eventually spawned the Acid Jazz scene. Through these connections Wallis met Nick, who knew Stewart and so on. Soon, through Acid Jazz Wallis was hearing about this new singer, Jay. Remembering him as "this little kid" he'd last seen going for it skateboarding in the park opposite Ealing tube station, Wallis couldn't believe it was the same person. "This is Jay? This guy is funky man!"

These days Jay's mother makes his hats, he has his success and he's still putting everything he's got into Jamiroquai. Enough, in fact, and it's probably important, to make him one of the very few people to sign such a massive record deal (seven albums with Sony) and still force his record company to do things his way. Being a mouthy geezer has paid off. "I know when I'm shit, when I'm a wanker but what's important is the music," he insists. "I've stuck to my guns at a major record company and that has helped bring live dance music out of the cupboard." Noticeably though JK is no musician. He's learning the flute but a ten-piece jazz-funk-fusion full on dance band needs more than that to really rock.

And yet it's Jason who has got the vast bulk of the band's song-writing royalties, who wrote songs like "When You Gonna Learn" and "Too Young To Die." It's something, he says, that just comes buzzing out of his head. "It's essential for me to get the music out of my head. I come up with the lines and Toby scores them for me. That's how it works. I'm a musician who can't play, I s'pose. Somebody who's got to interpret his ideas through people who can play, but I don't think that makes me any less of a musician. Sometimes, I yearn to be recognised for some of the music I make. I'm worried people will think I'm just some cunt who stands at the front."

He does it well; standing at the front. Live, Jamiroquai have evolved incredibly quickly. Back when they played at The Grand in London's Clapham early this year, they were like a bunch of jamming musicians almost oblivious to their audience. Their Sheffield Sound City gig, broadcast live on Radio One, was significantly sharper and tighter but in Japan they are like a different band. On the button. Partly it's down to Jay, he's more the show man now.

Happy to concentrate on performing for the crowd. Now, he seems sure enough of his band to let them go with it. Instead of concentrating on the jamming, he can get on with his dancing, his joking around.

He easily has a couple hundred dance moves, Jay. Every night they seem different. There's the Ski Dance where his arms punt back and forth together like he's making down some Alpine slope. There's the Steve Austin Special where he makes like The Six Million Dollar Man running in bionic slow motion. And best of all, The Stevie Wonder Exciter where he clenches himself tight and waves his body from left to right just like the maestro at his piano. New dances every night, new moves, different interplay with the audience. One night he feigns he's off to sleep under his multi-coloured quilt. "Sayonara. Good night," he waves to the audience before tucking under and snoring. Up he jumps. "Good morning!" he laughs. "Just like Postman Pat." He eyeballs the crowd, smiling. Gavin starts slapping the guitar for Emergency On Planet Earth. "Well, I suppose you wouldn't know about him," goes on Jay, "but he's got a black and white cat."

When Jamiroquai first arrived late last year with the instant club hit "When You Gonna Learn," the band was still developing. There was Jay and his musical right hand man and former house keyboardist, Toby Nick, the drummer, was in and so was the only didgeridoo player in Britain to have mastered true aboriginal-style circular breathing, Wallis Buchanan. But the ten-piece outfit drinking sake from self-heating cans in Japan is a very different team. The same central players are there but it's no longer four mates getting it together as best they can. This is a band in full roar. Signing to Sony for umpteen albums could have had Jay running for cover behind seasoned top pro's, instead he's kept Jamiroquai young and full of spunky attitude.

In Japan they are on the money, constantly changing the songs, refining them, funkifying them up, chopping them down, shaping the new tracks, but all the while firing with almost obsessive passion about the music. "The music, man, the music." It's all they talk about. "We're learning together," says Jay, backstage before one show amid all the sandwiches, beers and admirers. "I find a lot of older musicians are over the hill, there's no roughness, they're smooth. It's false. 'Cos I'm not a top boy myself they wouldn't suit me, wouldn't suit my voice. I'm not Stevie Wonder or Aretha Franklin, Stewart's [sic] not Bootsie Collins and Toby's not Herbie Hancock."

Jamiroquai's final night in Tokyo is a stormer. The crowd are older tonight, mid-20s, off-duty professionals in smart Acid Jazz gear. Hats are in the house too; furry Kangols, rasta woollen specials, canvas Sen Dog trilbys, dope dog stripey tubers and incredible, phat 70s crushed velvet flat caps. This is Japan's supercool elite. Despite the audience though, the band, wound up by a sneering local newspaper review, take the stage all rude anger ready to vent itself. The end result is two encores and a cover version of Larry Young Experience's rare groove classic "Turn Off The Lights" that packs so much raw, angry, young funk that the sheer animal excitement of the place has women clutching their hands to their heads and more than ever trying to make it backstage.

There's nothing amateur about Jay. Our cover photo requires him to pose out on Tokyo's streets, this on the day that Typhoon Ed scrapes by to the south, leaving the city drenched in some sort of Blade Runner-esque nightmare torrent. Ten seconds in this and you're soaked. With a hot property on a global tour, his managers are understandably not keen about having their key man risking his health in the rain. Jay though is game. Albeit briefly. His PR, his personal manager and his security man all crowd him, umbrellas sheltering him and his fuck off massive Technics headphones. Abandoning him for seconds at a time, Jay lazer beams a couple of cheesy grins and in just six shots he's given photographer Mark McNulty the co-operation he needs. Graciously he thanks us before his management whisk him away, past a growing gaggle of young, be-suited Japanese women who seem to have recognised him. Later, he makes a point of offering Mark the chance to take some more in his room "just in case."

Jay is just as capable of turning on the charm with his fans. Backstage after one gig, security man Mikey has been dishing out backstage passes to carefully-selected admirers. A trio wait patiently for Jay outside his dressing room. He emerges, gracefully making some joke with one about them wearing the same JK-trademark Puma trainers. He shakes hands, bows slightly, glides around them, smiling all the while, and is out of there so skilfully quick he ends up waiting for the rest of the band in their dressing room.

This isn't the same man who earlier got so worked up about his recent scrapes. "The other day," he started, "I got a [court] summons for playing football in Holland Park and that's what I'm talking about, just pushing that system back. I've always had a bit of disrespect for authority. It angers me that there are all these politicians who talk an awful lot about the same thing this week, last week, last year, five years ago and nothing changes. I just can't understand that stubbornness. I was always that kid who stood up in class and fought other people's fights and I'm still a bit like that. I'm not having it anymore. Bollocks to this. Bollocks to going to court." And then there was the fracas with some bloke who cut him up at a junction in front of Kings Cross, back in London. A head-to-head which ended with Jay slugging him and the police getting involved.

Such are the characteristics of a front man. There's nothing wrong with a good fiery front man. Especially when, as with Jamiroquai, the band can deliver the tunes. "I think," reckons Jay, "it's what I'm supposed to be doing. If you're worried about what people say, think, do, then you're not going to be a front man. You've got to have some front." And front he has. As several of the band make a point of saying, his heart is also in the right place. He may well rant like some bar room I-should-be-Prime-Minister mouthy geezer, but ultimately you can't help feeling his intentions at least are sincere.

"What worries me," he says, "is that if I get hassled by it too much I'm just going to give up talking about it and just get on with the music and refuse to do any interviews because it is just so soul-destroying to think that you're trying to make a point, you are trying to change something. All I want to see is a fairer deal for people who don't get a fairer deal, in our country and around the fucking world. And all I know is that there's a few people who are responsible for it. That's all I know and anybody who's trying to tell me I'm naive by saying that fucking really ought to go back to school because you've only got to turn the television on. Turn it on tonight and watch what goes on and then say what I'm saying is naive."

"It's come to the point where we can all sit and say, 'Oh, well, they're nice songs but we're never going to change anything.' Or you can think, maybe it is time to change something, maybe we have a generation of people who refuse to put up with it. All this bullshit! Spending £7 billion pounds trying to balance out the pound. Fucking shit!! Is it really all necessary? This is what I'm saying. I could take that money and how many hospitals can you build with seven billion pounds? And they spent all that trying to balance a pound note out and nothing to show for it. And this is what I protest against. And it doesn't make me a socialist, it doesn't make me a communist. And the fact that I've got three cars doesn't make me a capitalist."

"People have always got to go 'Hole! Hole!' [and want to put you in it]. And this is what I don't like. Every time someone goes, 'You're in that hole,' all I'll do is go, 'Yeah? Well, I'm not! I'm in that hole now and what are you going to do about it?' That just sums up my attitude more anything else. Just that."

**JK Interview #56 | NME
October 16th 1993
"Brother Up In Arms"**

JK talks about multi-racial Britain and racism in the music industry; also with Apache Indian

Why I'm a mummy's boy. At 27, Jamiroquai's Jason Kay, son of Seventies jazz star Karen Kay, is

living life in the fast lane - if his tales of trips down the M4 in his Lamborghini are to be believed. Kate Thornton discovers that he talks as fast as he drives..... Q) You travelled the world with your mother as a child. Was it a happy time? A) "Definitely, though not conventional. I was born in Manchester, an identical twin, but my brother died when he was six weeks old. It broke my poor mum's heart. My mum worked her butt off to give me what she could. She should have had the success I've got. When I was just a few months old, we went off to Nigeria and Las Vegas. It's always been just me and my mum in this game." Q) Was there enough money around in those days? A) "I remember being woken in the middle of the night by my mum sayingm 'Come on, we've got to to go,' and we'd tiptoe out of town because she couldn't afford to pay the rent. Raising a child alone isn't cheap or easy." Q) Has your mum always been supportive of your career? A) "Yes, she was so calm and reassuring saying, 'Go and get 'em, show them what you can do.' I couldn't have asked for more from her. When I left school, I bummed around so much that my mum kicked me out of home, in the hop it would motivate me to do something with my life. I understand why she did it because I was spiralling into criminal activity. It was for my own good." Q) You've never met your Portuguese father. Are you tempted to track him down? A) "Of course, I've got to find him. All I have is one picture of him." Q) You have a Lamborghini, two Ferraris, three BMWs, an Aston Martin and a Mercedes - why so many cars? A) "I sat in cars all my life as a child. That's why I love them. We were always going somewhere on the motorway. To drive fast is all I've wanted from the age of three. When I lost my licence last year because of speeding, it was terrible - but I got it back in March." Q) What are your plans for the future? A) "I want a place in the country with a studio, and fields where I can keep chickens and goats. I'd really enjoy the simple life. I just want to earn a healthy living so that later I can travel the world and see rhinos before they're all gone."

**JK Interview #57 | Mademoiselle
September 1993**

"Fresh Funk From London Comes To America" By Jemima Hunt

A short feature on the band with a few words from JK on the name
"Jamiroquai"

Jason Kay, 22, the sultry singer of Jamiroquai, knows how to strut his stuff. His voice - reminiscent of a young Stevie Wonder - and the band's jazz-funk sounds are creating quite a buzz in Jamiroquai's hometown of London. The group's debut disc, Emergency on Planet Earth, hits American stores this month.

Musically, Kay takes his cues from funksters like George Clinton and Sly Stone; politically, he takes cues from the Native-American Iroquois tribe. In fact the name Jamiroquai is a synthesis of the word jam (as in rock) and the Native-American tribe's name. "The Iroquois give back to the earth what they take," he says. "We can learn from their respect." Most of the songs on the album, including the single "When You Gonna Learn," have environmental themes. And Kay intends to give 7 percent of the record's profits to Greenpeace, an environmental activist group. As Kay says, "You can't really preach and not practice."

**JK Interview #58 | Melody Maker
July 17th 1993**

**"Who The Hell Is The Man In The Hat?"
By David Bennun**

JK rants and raves about the media's treatment of him; includes "Kick out the

Jam? The Biz on Jamiroquai," some opinions on Jamiroquai from Stevie Wonder, Greenpeace, and others

After less than a year in the recording business, Jason Kay, the man who is Jamiroquai, has developed an understanding with the press. They are highly suspicious of him, and he hates their guts.

"It's funny," he half-grins, half-grimaces, as my tape recorder appears. "I always smoke twice as much during these interviews than normal."

But Jay likes a challenge, relishes a bit of verbal sparring. And it's not something the European press are likely to give him. At today's press conference at the Roskilde festival in Denmark, dozens of eager Euro-hacks press forward to grab a chunk of the outspoken new star's wisdom.

"Any questions?" invites the PR officer. An awkward hush falls over the assemblage. Finally, a well-turned-out young chap in a black turtle-neck gives his pencil a tentative wave in the air.

"What brand of cigarettes do you smoke?" comes his piercing enquiry.

To Jay, this must feel like a holiday. His write-ups in the British press have varied from the sceptical to the downright hostile.

They've tended to focus on his recent arrival in the industry; his alarmingly sudden and spectacular success (a debut album glued to the Number One spot, already outselling Suede's chart-topping opus by over 50,000 copies); his position as a white singer flogging black music (the implication being that he's some kind of soul version of Vanilla Ice who's enjoyed an easy ride to the top); his well-publicised opinions of ecology, politics and anything else beneath the depleted ozone layer that happens to catch his attention.

Jay Kay is none too happy about this. In fact, Jay Kay is spitting mad.

Have you had it easy, Jay?

"I think that's absolute bullshit. I think people just wanna have a look at their own lives and have a look at what it took them just to get there. So if people think that running five kilos of hash down the street in your underpants is easy, and if they think that not wanting to do a nine-to-five job, yet not really wanting to be a criminal either, is easy, then they ain't done a lot of living. If they think that having one fucking candle, a grotty sleeping bag and your last spliff of hash is easy - it ain't easy."

Jay spits out words in a south London voice, heavily inflected, dripping with sarcasm and scatology. People who've heard his eco-sound lyrics or read his pronouncements upon the state of the world often expect him to be a mimsy new age peace freak.

They're at least partly wrong. Here's a new age peace freak with attitude, and a caustic sense of humour. Even when he's talking shit, Jay talks impassioned and highly entertaining shit.

Born 23 years ago of a jazz-singing mother and an absent Portuguese father, Jay was largely left to his own devices, which included dope-dealing and building up a collection of musical gear,

while sleeping wherever he could find a friendly floor. Although Jamiroquai only became a band after the release of his first single, he'd been plugging away at his music for years.

"If you think it's easy working with a partner who's very negative," Jay rants on about a former musical accomplice, "constantly showing a great deal of contempt for my musical ability, because I can't play an instrument, staying in bed until five or six in the afternoon while I'm throwing stones at his window, pretending he's not in or asleep or having an extra long masturbating session or whatever; if you think it's easy dealing with a major record company when they want to make you into a pop star, and you're saying, 'You can have a bit, but you're not having that' - it ain't easy.

"If I took my hat off I could slip into a Chesney Hawkes kind of thing. But it gives me my aura - it's like a warrior kind of thing. I ain't fucking soft, know what I mean? Shit! I tell them to fuck off, I produce the album, and it gets to Number One. People are ready for something fresh, they're tuning in. Most copies went through word of mouth..."

He breaks off suddenly from his cursing. The bopping and jiggling with which he accompanies the music constantly playing in his head, cease. He makes a dive for the carpet by my feet.

"I thought I spotted some sensimilla," he explains, disappointingly fingering some yellow-brown stuff on the floor. "It's mud."

On MTV Europe, it's Planet Alert Weekend. The likes of Hothouse Flowers wander around the woodlands like solemn dryads, issuing portentous blather concerning the spirituality of trees.

On MTV in America, Jamiroquai's video for "When You Gonna Learn," mixing images of cruelty, blight, disaster and genocide, has just been banned - as it has on most other TV stations in the States.

"Grrreat!" Jay grins like Tony the Tiger. "That was the whole idea, it's not a pretty video, not a pretty subject. I want it to make people fucking cry. 'Haven't we had enough of this?' NO! No, we have not had enough of this, it's not a game, it's not a joke, it's a fucking serious thing. You know, good. Good. I'd expect America to fucking ban it, because it's just basically having a dig at all the bullshit that goes on in their country.

"I wasn't trying to compare it to environmental issues. But I put in those images of the Holocaust because if you can't see that Nazism is on the rise, if you don't remind people, then it's just going to come back. Like, in America, you can't have the Black Panthers, you don't allow them to operate. But funny isn't it? - the Ku Klux Klan, and the Aryan nation, they're still going."

Jay speed-taks like a man on amphetamine milkshakes. God knows what he'd be like without frequent recourse to Jazz Woodbines.

Don't you reckon, Jay, that the issues you tackle in your songs are too complex for the way you approach them? That you romanticise nature, simplify politics?

"Yeah. Yeah, sure." Jay sounds weary of the topic. "I know that I'm not particularly well versed in what I'm talking about a lot of the time. I'm not a politician. I'm not one of the great speakers of

our fucking time. I'm just a 23-year-old geezer. But then again, yeah, I might simplify the world's problems, but fuck me, is it that difficult?

"What are we talking about here?" he goes on, punctuating each point with a thump on the table in his hotel room. "We're talking about Americans not being fat cunts and eating so much fucking food, not spending so much fucking money on weapons, and not going into countries to fucking fight because there's something in it for you, and spending some money on food and irrigation for the Sahara and solar panels for fucking energy and electric cars which you could bring out now but don't because motor manufacturers will lose money and the light bulb that lasts for fucking ever on very little energy and these things we can have now!" (Thump! Thump! Thump!)

I wonder to myself whether he's met Jello Biafra and Chuck D. They would get along famously.

"I know what you're getting at. I get at it myself. Do you think I don't go home and watch myself on the television and think, 'What a prat! What's he talking about?' Course I do! But what else am I going to do? Because in the end I knowledgeable myself on the subject and then maybe try and do something about it. I know, I'm a fucking hypocrite, I've got two fucking classic cars, and we have an ozone problem..."

I didn't know you had two classic cars.

Jay's face takes on a look like he's just shot himself first in one foot, then the other.

"Still, I don't drive them both at once."

Some have heralded "Emergency on Planet Earth" as a rebirth for Seventies-style soul and fusion (in the case of the latter, rather like saying "Welcome back, Damien").

Others have dismissed Jamiroquai as this year's Simply Red, although Jason has a long way to go before he can produce as fine a collection of soft-soap soul as "Stars." Yet others have compared the band to Curiosity Killed the Cat.

"Too harsh!" howls Jay. "That's mental cruelty. I'm giving up now.

"Look. It's like this," he calms down. "We're rehashing Seventies music. Yeah. Well, funny about them hip hop boys who just take 16-beat samples of old tunes. Nobody has a pop at them. Nobody has a pop at the many, many indie bands who do sound quite similar."

Oh, we do. We do.

"Okay. But, fuck, pick on a guy in a crowd!"

Here's my opinion, for what it's worth. I heard your first single, "When You Gonna Learn," and it was an unabashed, funky, forceful pop tune, in the mould and class of prime Stevie Wonder, and praise doesn't come much higher than that. Compared to it, the LP seems to consist mostly of limp jams. What I'm hoping is that you're going to write some more songs as good as that first one.

"We will," Jay promises, "but what you've got to understand is that the album should have been out in September, but because the record company wanted to keep the momentum there was a deadline. We didn't have any writing time - you know, the track 'Emergency on Planet Earth' was written in the studio."

And sounds it.

"And sounds it." He gives a rueful cackle. "In the time we had to do it in, compared to what a lot of people put out, I don't think that album's too bad. For a first go, for a bunch of beginners who ain't been together long, it ain't too bad. I understand what you're saying; I think some of the criticisms are fair. But that's good, because, fuck, if the album was fucking brilliant, how hard would it be to come up with something better? The second album will be better. It's a learning process. By the second or third album, you might be hearing - Jamiroquai."

I've got my fingers crossed. It makes it a bugger trying to type; but I'm keeping 'em that way.

**KICK OUT THE JAM?
THE BIZ ON JAMIROQUAI**

*"Stevie Wonder has never heard of Jamiroquai."
- Keith Harris, Stevie Wonder's manager*

*"When we put Jamiroquai on the cover, we were looking for someone young, fresh and British. More sophisticated readers were already questioning his opinions. But he came along at a time when the house crowd were fed up, and everyone wanted a good tune. I don't think he's particularly better than NcKoy or the Brand New Heavies, but, like him or loathe him, he has star quality. There aren't any stars around today. He's talented, but he's also lucky."
- Sheryl Garrett, Editor, The Face*

"He was signed on the strength of 'When You Gonne Learn.' He has a great voice, a lot of presence. He wanted to be a pop star, which we couldn't work for him as effectively as Sony could. Jay spent the whole of last year building a fan base - he hasn't got a larger fan base than JTQ [the James Tayloy Quartet] had when they were on Polydor, but he's obviously a priority at Sony.

*"We've spent the last five years being told by retailers that we can't sell this kind of music. You have to sell to people in Simon Bates-land and Sony can do that."
- Dean Rudland, A&R; Manager, Acid Jazz (Jamiroquai's former label)*

*"We think it's fantastic. He represents the opinions of the youth today, who are very concerned about the environment. It's very important that someone in his position, with media access, is willing to do what he's doing. He signed the Norwegian anti-whaling boycott, and helped promote it at Glastonbury. "I think his records are great, really groovy. No, we don't play them in the office. We don't play any music in the office. We're too busy."
- Kate Johnson, Press Officer, Greenpeace*

Have you heard of Jamiroquai?

Graham: "Yes."

Clint: "Yes."

What do you think of them?

Graham: "Curiosity Killed The Cat."

Clint: "Shit."

What do you think of their success?

Graham: "Congratulations."

Clint: "I'm very pleased for them."

- Pop Will Eat Itself

"I don't find it distasteful; I just think he's lucky. He can sing. But it's the hype, man. Don't believe the hype. It made me feel a bit gutted, all those artists who've been working at it for years and can't get a look-in. But all I can say to him is congratufuckinglations, because it ain't easy with that kind of music. It ain't pop, it ain't rock, it ain't techno."

- Sarah Webb, D-Influence

"Jamiroquai have done a very good job reinventing old soul styles and bringing in elements into their fusion - clearly it's very popular. But my favorite comment about Jamiroquai is that they're 'Shakatak with a hat!' - I hope they see the humor in that!"

- Mark Goodier, Radio 1

"I like his music. But he should be a bit more humble."

- The Head, Stereo MC's

"We wore Adidas Gazelles four years ago. Inspiration - Glen Hoddle not The Face. Anyone who takes and steals from Wonder's 'Innervisions' is cool by us. We like his hair and the fact that he thinks a tree is worth a 100 humans. Respect. One criticism - 'Sexy lady, squeeze ya' is too close to Sheffield's favourite sons. Wanna get rocked?"

- Manic Street Preachers

"I have never heard of Mr. Jamiroquai, but when I was in the seventh grade I used to wear blue suede Pumas just like his. Very comfortable, if I recall. Bitter, judgemental and bubblegum as always."

- Greg Dulli, Afghan Whigs

JK Interview #59 | Mail On Sunday

July 11th 1993

"The Family Tragedy That Haunts Pop's Angry Young Man"

BY Art McCulloch & Denna Allen

An intimate look at JK's childhood

Jason Kay is the rock world's latest angry young man. And its richest.

His music, a jazz-funk fusion, and his political attitude have, at 22, sent him well on his way to his first million.

*His trademark Red Indian witch doctor's hat atop his stick-thin body have put him on the cover of the style bible *The Face* and helped take him and his group Jamiroquai to this week's Number One with their first album.*

Limousines, international tours, adoration and girls followed almost instantly.

In every interview, he takes the opportunity to lecture his teenage audiences on the injustices of the world and the need for social reform.

The stance of the adolescent rebel is, of course, a well-worn posture in the rock world, employed to great commercial success by, among others, Mick Jagger- who despite his comfortable middle-class origins, used his 'street fighting man' persona to turn himself into a showbusiness god worth £60 million.

No one can say for sure whether Jason Kay is genuinely angry at what he sees and is making a sincere plea for change; or whether he puts on and takes off this cloak, like a pop star's glitter jacket, whenever it suits him.

He is, however, clearly angry about something and much of it appears to be rooted in his childhood. He was, he says, a latch-key child, trudging home from school to an empty house most nights, with a stepfather who was overly strict and a father whom he never met but dreamed of playing football with in the park.

His mother was a cabaret singer with whom he has frequent rows, many of which ended with Jason being thrown out of the house. And she was, and still is, the kind of middle of the road performer we might expect Jason to sneer at.

*Karen Kay will be remembered by the parents of Jason's young fans for her many performances on TV shows with Des O'Connor, Leslie Crowther's *Scrapbook* and *Blankety Blank*. But what clearly troubles him most is the news, broken to him when he was a small boy, that he had been born a twin; and his brother, names David, had died after six weeks from brain damage.*

*In a recent interview with a university magazine, the *Sheffield City Press*, Kay told student journalists Paul Barthram and Sairah Awan: 'We were identical twins. He died at birth coming out the wrong way, with the umbilical cord wrapped round his neck, and got brain damage.*

'My mother just said: 'Turn the mahine off, it's just a waste of time.'

'With one kid who would eventually be at school, and another who's have to be looked after, she was working at the time and it was too much for her to cope with.'

Last night in Hamburg, where he is on a concert tour, Kay - who it must be said is immensely likable in the flesh - once again returned to the death of his twin brother. 'I'm glad Mum told me about David because he's become such a feature in my life. I've taken on his body strength, and I

think he's out there looking after me. My brother is my conscience - I mean, we're linked strongly - and you know what they say about twins that are split up: they know what each other is doing.'

The image of a neglected child in tough circumstances is relentless. Kay has revealed that he did not know his father, who was Portuguese. 'I never met him,' he confesses. 'It'll work out, I'm sure, but sometimes it's not very good to work these things out.'

For a counter-culture superstar, Kay's upbringing appears to be an unhappy landscape from which he is unable to escape.

He said last night: "My mother gave me an exposure to the business that toughened me at an early age. I remember as a kid being in Las Vegas when Mum was doing three shows a night - and I was asleep in the room on my own.

There were a lot of sticky patches when I was a kid. She used to shout at me to get myself a job and start making a contribution to the household.'

Karen Kay, whose comedy series ran on the BBC, was an old-fashioned star at a time when the punk rock scene was in its infancy: always willing to play the 'game' in interviews, projecting an image of contentment, with a husband called Mervyn and a young son, Jason, whom she simply adored.

But times changed quickly for Karen Kay. Almost overnight, she disappeared from our TV screens and was last rumored to be performing overseas.

Yet another B-list star who didn't quite make it.

Karen always painted a picture of family bliss in the village of Ardleigh, outside Colchester, where the family lived for five years in the Seventies.

But she had to work, and she sacrificed much of motherhood to make ends meet.

One neighbor said last week: 'Jason had a strange upbringing. He was left to himself most of the time. Once when he was about five, he ran sobbing to a neighbor because he'd come home from school and his parents were out. He had a key, but he was too small to reach the latch.'

But Karen worked hard to send Jason, who was born in Stretford, Manchester, to boarding school, where he is remembered for his 'Cockney accent' and his rendition of the Lambeth Walk in the school play.

His verdict on that time is what one would expect of a young man who is the current king of the streetwise: 'I'm quite glad I was sent to boarding school because I did see a side of people who go to boarding school and the kind of pillocks they turn out to be, stuck-up people. It's good to see the spectrum because I've also seen the bottom of the scale.'

It seems inevitable that before long Kay's posters will plaster bedroom walls across Britain and teenage girls will faint at his concerts as he lives up to an eight-album record deal with Sony.

The pressures - as Sony executives know only too well - must at some point force Jason into the mainstream, even though he is undoubtedly a brilliant musician.

But there is clearly a desperate personal sadness in Jason's relationship with his mother, who refuses to talk about her son. In so doing, she allows only Jason's side of the story to be told.

Both mother and son have tasted fame. But the difference between them is that one knows that adulation can corrupt and ruin.

And one has yet to discover it.

JK Interview #60 | Interview Magazine

June 1993

"Jamiroquai" By Jill Selsman

"Brit soul sensation pays respect to Iroquois nation"



Jay Kay, front man and guiding spirit of the new Brit soul pack Jamiroquai, explains his band's name this way: "It stands for that desire, buried deep within us all, to just sit in the mud with no clothes on." More literally, the moniker derives from the Iroquois, the Native American confederation whose spiritual reverence for the earth is one of many socially conscious topics in the group's music. With its disco-jazz grooves and Jay's soulful, Little Stevie Wonder-like vocals, Jamiroquai's first single, "When You Gonna Learn"-- released by Columbia this month-- takes on everything from racism to corporate greed. On the basis of that song and a few live dates, Sony Music signed the group to a multiple-album deal, the first of which is due out in late summer. Hats off to this enlightened lad, even though you'd be hard-pressed to find him without his.

JK Interview #61 | Select Magazine

May 1993

"Jay Of Jamiroquai: The Emergent Funkateer"

JK divulges his favorite sexual fantasies and describes his ideal woman

Would you like to shag to your own music?

"No. No. No. No. The trouble is, I mean shagging to music can be a pain because one tends to get in time and not really pay attention to the job at hand."

What's on your shagging tape?

"Well, Kool And The Gang's 'Summer Madness', 'Pleasure Guide', Joyous' by Pleasure, the whole of Marvin Gaye's 'I Want You', but that's just as a matter of course isn't it? The Isley Brothers 'Who's That Lady'."

Most intense erotic experience?

"It was actually quite recently; I met somebody who I was quite into and the erotica was kind of more love and I enjoyed that. There was actually very little sexual contact, there was no er penetration but it was nice. (Embarrassed) The most intense moment was well the rubbing of the (dissolves into giggles), the rubbing of member against other flesh. Just pleasantry, you know? She's gone to Goa but she's coming back soon... and we'd also partaken of some LSD. No wonder it was intense? Well exactly."

Ever had a homosexual experience?

"Not that I recall. I think I'll leave that to the chaps with the mustaches. Very nice, but not for me thanks."

First sexual experience?

"It was wicked! I was 13, she was 17. It lasted all of about two minutes, but it was fantastic. Much better than playing with yourself, anyway. She was playing a bit of a game, you know, I'm the older girl, you're a young boy, and she lay on the bed with a little towel round her and I got the horn and thought, Aye, aye, I could take liberties here, what's all this about? And I found out what pubic hairs were all about."

What turns you off?

"Er, women with mustaches. And girls that want to jump into bed too quick, man. That does turn me off. Especially in the perilous times we live in. I must say I'm very wary of girls who jump into bed quick, and they're in bed and making a V and I kind of think that's dangerous because if you do that with me how many other geezers have you done that with? Hairy armpits on girls. I've always thought a lady is a lady and shouldn't really have hairy armpits."

What's your favourite sexual fantasy?

"Ummmmm. Well, it aint being with two women. My ultimate fantasy is to make love with true love. I know that might sound bit boring, but I haven't really been in love properly, so it does mean a lot to me. Because then you can just go all the way can't you? You could do anything you like and you can get a bit harder and get into some role-playing and all that. It's good stuff."

What is a pervert?

"Playing with kids, shit like that, physical violence... simulated violence is good. Well, not good but if it's something that you lead on to so as to keep the relationship alive, like a bit rough and ready. But, but, but... I would draw the line early, I think. A good sling on to the bed and ripping off of the clothes is all good clean fun, nothing nasty. Just good clean fun."

What's the second thing you look for in a woman?

"The first thing is really the personality. The second is the body and the looks. The whole lot. I suppose it's the first thing, but they might be thick as pigshit, you know what I mean? You generally know. There's something about the quiet girl who's sitting in the corner, doesn't say a lot but is really cute and mysterious. Never the woman who's dancing on the table, or the one that grabs you arm when you're walking down the street. I'm too reserved."

Do you use a condom?

"Yep. Always. Always. I have had sex in my time without a condom, but that was a lot earlier on in my career. I'm a realist, I've got far too much to live for. There's so much more to do than intercourse anyway. If you haven't got a condom you can get round that. If you fuck like rabbits every day you get bored. If it's spread out, like say every two weeks then it's serious, and you look forward to it and it's worth it. And you don't get bored. Relationships are in vogue."

What's your most regrettable sexual experience?

"My mate said, Oh there's these two girls-let's go round there! And we went round, and his was alright but my one was not happening. Not the sort of girl I would have gone for at all. But of course the bottle had been opened, and as the night went on she started to look a bit better... Then in the morning I found myself in the bedroom cowering on the side of the bed. I was out of the house so fast! I just thought, Why did I do that, why did I bother? I felt like a fool/ I've never seen her since."

Do you use pornography?

"What to enhance...? Well pornography - I think they make such a big deal out of it and it isn't. I've certainly seen my share of dirty films, you know, Back Door Girls and all that. I just laugh at them anyway. I have used it when I was a bit younger. I wouldn't use it with a girl really. I wouldn't play that card now. Sex with one person is something that can last for ever so long, and you can really still be well interested and play all sorts of really good games. But... I'd save all that till I'm 30, then you could watch a video and say, Lets do what they do."

Have you ever used the Pinch Method?

"What's that? No I can't say that I have. I'll have to try it, thanks."

Describe your ideal woman.

"Dark, Latin American, big brown eyes. Nice and soft and sensual and warm and cuddly."

How do you rate yourself sexually?

"I'm very sensual and imaginative and, because I've been with a lot of girls over the years and I haven't always had intercourse with them, so I've kept myself kind of clean and fresh. When I'm having sex with a girl, I'm thinking about her and... it's like a massage, if someone gives you a massage and they're not putting their thoughts through their hands, it's no good. I'm not Casanova. that's for sure. I'm just average. I could be Mr. Pinch and keep it going for hours with pinch marks all over me, but as far as I'm concerned I don't think there's anything wrong with a nice half an hour extravaganza. I'm a Capricorn, you see. We're late starters. The girl who gets it together with me has got it all to come. When they get to 30, 35, when they really want it, then I'll be there. Ha, ha, ha, ha, haa!"

Who did you fancy when you were younger?

"I fancied Stephanie Hart out of Hart to Hart. I wanted to give her one badly. And I fancied Jane Seymour, and Barbara Bach, I was really into those Bond girl types - I really wanted some of that. Pussy Galore, Honor Blackman. She was great and she still looks for about 70."

How important is sex to you?

"Oh, it's very important, but not more important than music. Not more important than my friends. And not more important than classic cars. It's not more important than a good nights sleep. It is very important to me. - I love it, I do love it. It's great. And yeah, I do take my hat off."

**JK Interview #62 | The Face
May 1993
"Boy Wonder" By Ekow Eshun**

"He sings like Stevie Wonder, talks like Bob Dylan on speed, and his music has been a breath of fresh air on British dancefloors. Stardom beckons for Jamiroquai, but can he take the pressure?"



He sings like Stevie Wonder, talks like Bob Dylan on speed, and his music has been a breath of fresh air on British dancefloors. Stardom beckons for Jamiroquai, but can he take the pressure?

Whew, but JK can talk. Like a market trader anxious to show off his wares, he's no sooner convinced you of the "Knock down bargain, you won't find a better offer, get it now, buy, buy, buy, never to be repeated" value of the goods in front of you, than he's rustling around behind his stall and sticking something else under your nose. It's exhausting and sometimes baffling. Especially as he's wont to leap from one topic to another, launching into a diatribe about the rainforests that, improbably, turns into a rant about road taxes and car clamping. He's got the sort of fog-horn personality you'd normally give a wide berth to in the pub. Yet close your eyes, let his words wash over you, and they actually start to make sense. Matched with a disarming sincerity, his flag-waving, trumpet-blasting, relentlessly opinionated character is surprisingly endearing. It sets JK, and his group Jamiroquai, in stark relief to the sort of bland, anodyne pop groups who currently crowd the charts. Even if, as we'll see later, it also leads to some interesting and embarrassing contradictions.

It's a late April night at the Strongroom, the east London studio where Jamiroquai are recording their debut album, "Emergency On Planet Earth". JK's voice rises and falls over an elaborate Latin arrangement played by bassist Stuart Zender, drummer Nick Van Gelder and keyboardist Toby Smith. Although this is only the third time they've played the song, "Music In My Mind", the green light which signals a master recording is on. And as with most tracks on the album, JK is insistent that it be recorded "live", in one take. But even as it builds to a resounding conclusion, he's shaking his head.

"It's not right, it's just not right. We want a tune that has that feel to it, and this ain't there." "We can overdub the high hats, Stevie Wonder did that all the time," suggests Nick Van Gelder.

"No man, I'm not going back with a track that ain't right, it's got to be bollocks right!" he answers, striding out of the studio. With only 28 days to go until the deadline imposed by the band's record label Sony, and only half an album recorded so far, the Strongroom has been the scene of frayed nerves, arguments and exhaustion. Keyboardist Toby is nursing a bronchial infection precipitated by stress. And JK is trying to acclimatise to new-found celebrity status, while delivering on the massive eight-album contract he signed with Sony at the close of 1992. "It feels like being on a runaway horse in a cowboy movie," he grimaces, "when you're being dragged along at the back, with your head bumping along the ground."

"When You Gonna Learn", the debut single by Jamiroquai, then the solo name of JK (born Jason Kaye), was released on Acid Jazz late last year. By rights it should have disappeared without a trace. Not, that's to say, through any fault of the record itself. Far from it, in fact. A vibrant inspirational funk track which harked back explicitly, some would say shamelessly, to the early Seventies sound of Stevie Wonder, Roy Ayers and Gil Scott Heron, it was widely hailed as one of the most striking soul debuts in recent years. One that was all the more remarkable for coming from a white 22-year-old from Ealing, whose voice sounded disconcertingly like a woman imitating Stevie Wonder. But given the poor distribution and minimal promotion that bedevils many independent releases, it could very easily have slipped into glorious obscurity beside other outstanding British soul/funk tracks, such as McKoy's "Family". Instead, the record's brassy optimism struck a chord with club-goers getting steadily restless with the metronome beat of house.



The song became an underground hit and made Jamiroquai into the subject of a bidding war among the major labels. With a flurry of "next big thing" media interest ringing in his ears, JK signed a deal with Sony worth 100,000 pounds. If fully honoured by both parties, he'll now be making records until the age of 50. Transformed into a tight four-piece, with a live brass section that pushed their number to ten, Jamiroquai played Brixton Academy in front of 5,000 people and then watched as their major label, "Too Young To Die", quickly went top ten. The group have now arrived centre stage. Their name, derived from the Native American Iroquai tribe, and once the source of much perplexity, now rolls smoothly off most tongues. And the fur hat that JK has affected since his youth has lent him the sort of idiosyncratic

cachet expected of pop stars. All of this has taken months rather than years. And, perhaps inevitably, such a speedy ascent has made JK the focus of a range of conflicting emotions. Mention Jamiroquai in the London jazz and funk club scene he hails from, and few are merely neutral. For most, there is respect at the singer's prodigious talent, and his success at taking funk to the heart of the mainstream. If some will admit to this only grudgingly, their reluctance can mostly be attributed to a strain of green-eyed scepticism.

*Still, others bear a more fundamental resentment. "He's very talented," comments one black onlooker. "As white people are at copying black people." That Jamiroquai's songs are packed with references to a black musical legacy of soul, funk, jazz and fusion is undeniable. And certainly, JK would hardly be the first white artist to be accused of "stealing" that tradition. From Elvis to Jerry Lee Lewis to Vanilla Ice and Marky Mark, countless white acts have been targeted as examples of cultural colonialism; the process whereby the mainstream looks to marginal black culture, and makes R&B, the blues or hip hop its own. As such, many black people have exhaled a weary sigh of *deja vu* at the group. To add further grist to the mill, their success also coincided with the decision by several majors to drop many talented black artists, including Courtney Pine and Omar.*

Arguably much the same number of white acts have been dropped as well, at a time when record companies are feeling the sting of the recession. But this is immaterial. The popular feeling remains that JK has taken something which doesn't belong to him, and denies many black performers the opportunity of mainstream success. Such arguments may be valid in principle, yet they also suggest that it's somehow illegitimate for Jamiroquai to even think of making soul, or worse, to be any good at it. Given this, JK's response, when I put these claims to him, is surprising to say the least. Not only does he nod his head in sympathy, but he also launches into his own diatribe about the appropriation of black music.

"Has it been easier for me as a white artist?" he asks, taking a pensive drag on a cigarette. "From looking at what goes on, I'd say yeah. I know how black artists are treated in the business and it's diabolical. But I'd also say, look at techno and house, all that came from hip hop and house in Chicago and Detroit, it's a black thing. Look at Snow, 'Informer', what's that? It's all white people delving into heavy black roots, making dough out of it, keeping it going long enough to make a nice little scene. All of a sudden, you're blind to where it came from and it's a white scene!"

So where does that leave a group like Jamiroquai? "The bottom line is, I like the music and I'm doing it out of respect. If someone's trying to do something crap and make money out of it, like Snow, that's one thing. I'm not doing it to say, 'Hey I'm white and I can do this.' I'm actually trying to make music for everybody, and if you look at the crowd at my gigs, you'll see black, white, Asian, Chinese, every type of person, which is sweet." All of this is said at a scatter-gun pace which leaves no time for premeditation and underscores his sincerity and admiration for black culture. End of story. Or at least, it would have been if JK hadn't insisted on adding his own postscript, as though his mouth were running away with him.

"I've got soul, a feeling for what I'm doing. That's what black people are good at. Look at Jimi Hendrix, look at James Brown Get Down. He's doing what he's doing, without worrying about anything else. But a lot of white artists, especially today, haven't got it, it just ain't happening for them."

Does that mean that compared to them, you've got soul? "Yeah, of course. Because soul is the energy and emotion you put into something. That's why black music from the Thirties onwards is so fucking good. 'Cause it's come out of shit, out of cotton fields and singing in church. When the only thing you've got left is your fucking voice."



Why does he do it? Opening his mouth when it would be better off shut, JK leaves himself open to ridicule. It's plainly absurd, after all, to compare the source of his talent with that of blacks in the Thirties, for some whom slavery was still a living memory. Yet it's almost as if he can't help it. In an interview with London club culture magazine Touch, he told black MP Bernie Grant, who'd compared racial conditions in Nineties Britain to those of Sixties America, to "sort himself out". "There's no point looking to the past," he explains to me. "It's been done and it never works, because whenever there's a militant black front, you'll get a militant white front." But, ironically, Bernie Grant is the Labour MP whose majority increased by the largest amount during the last election. Which suggests that he speaks with a good deal more authority and popular support than JK. As one established figure within the club scene scoffed, "He carries a lot of weight on his shoulders. Four hundred years of white middle-class oppression from Ealing."

Who is JK addressing, I wonder? "When You Gonna Learn" and "Too Young To Die" are filled with exhortations for the politicians to stand back, for ordinary people to take control and make the world a better place. When I press him further, he heads off into a tremendous spiel about the rainforests, foreign debt and the burgeoning global population. But isn't he preaching to the converted? After all, who doesn't agree that all of these are great evils, that "something must be done"? The question, though, is what? And how much can a singer, whose records get radio airplay sandwiched between Take That and 2 Unlimited, really make any difference?

"I look at myself as a little person and the people who run the Government as big people," he says, leaning forward. "They hold all the cards and are saying, 'You can't do anything about it.' But I'm saying there's people who can't eat, we're having wars all the time, that the Government's taking the piss. And I'm trying to generate money which I can donate to Greenpeace and Friends Of The Earth and Oxfam, people who can help sort things out."

Born in Ealing, Jason Kaye [sic] is the only child of a single-parent family. He says he has never met his Portugese father and was raised by his mother, Karen Kaye, a nightclub jazz singer. Although he speaks of her working with, among others, Dizzy Gillespie and Ronnie Scott, she is not widely known, even among jazz aficionados. Mark Sinker, the knowledgable editor of jazz magazine the Wire, professed ignorance when I asked about her, and the name Karen Kaye is not listed in even the most exhaustive jazz encyclopedia. While she didn't push her son into singing, she was, in other respects, a hard taskmaster. "She wanted me to find my own way and experience things for myself. At times I thought she was being so hard, like 'no you can't have any money, go and find your own, it's your problem'. All the time, push, push, push, go out there and realise you've got to deal

with life." Even now that he's successful, JK hesitates before playing her his songs. "She has high expectations, and she can pick out if a note's flat or a song isn't right. So of course I'm jittery playing her stuff, because you don't wanna get your mum's 'you can do better son' slap round the ear, do you?" During his adolescence, their relationship all but disintegrated. "It was diabolical, down the dumps," he shudders. And from 16 to 20, he claims he was periodically thrown out of the house, to wind up living rough on nearby Haverstock Hill, or sleeping in squats without heat or light. Through all that time, he was trying to make music, singing into a four-track tape machine and supporting himself "by doing bits of crime and thieving and marijuana hustles". Only in 1991 did his fortunes improve. A chance meeting with Tunji Williams - younger brother of Femi from the Young Disciples, former manager of the Brand New Heavies, and current manager of Jamiroquai - led to a demo for Acid Jazz, which became the "When You Gonna Learn" single. Overnight success, then, has apparently taken years of graft in difficult circumstances. And along the way, JK's learned to say and do what he wants, heedless of others.



"I suppose I've got a bit of an ego on me," he admits with a grin. "But I've lived on my own a lot, so you learn to look after yourself and you just can't change. Anyway, I'd rather be like this, 'cause you gotta have a bit about you to get on, to have the confidence to get through."

At present in the London club scene, stories are legion about Jamiroquai. They say JK is exploiting the rest of the group, who are unsigned to Sony. That he has arbitrarily sacked previous band members and studio staff.

And they point to his two classic cars, a 1968 Mercedes and a 1972 BMW, as proof that behind his eco-consciousness is hypocrisy. The band, HE stresses, earn session fees and potentially lucrative percentage points of record sales; two cars hardly amounts to gross opulence; and, if musicians are hired and fired, such is the nature of business.

But while he shrugs away the tales, they're still indicative of the gulf celebrity has opened between him and the clubbers he used to rub shoulders with. "Friends treat you differently, they try to make out that because you've now got something, you're a bloody capitalist" he says, voice rising. "I'm just a guy who walks the streets, I don't want to be lauded or glorified. People think you want to be a star and have all the trimmings, like big limos or screaming girls. But that's bogus, it's false. Never mind what I've got, concentrate on what I'm trying to do."

How long can JK remain the angry young man of the pop charts? If the message in the music is all, then this surely presages some uncomfortable trade-offs with Sony. After all, the label's aim is to nurture a commercial pop product that will bring the smartest return on its investment. It's perhaps ominous that, with the ink still fresh on JK's contract, George Michael, frustrated by a similar lifetime deal, was suing Sony in search of an escape clause. So far Jamiroquai are ahead in the game. Sony initially attempted to foist on the group a

middle-aged producer, more used to working with Erasure and the Pasadenas, to oversee the recording of "Too Young To Die". After dismissing him and scoring a top ten hit, they've now been given full artistic control over "Emergency On Planet Earth".

But until recently, their follow-up single was understood to be "Revolution", a live favourite whose title trumpets its militant message. Yet now, reportedly after pressure from Sony (the group deny this), the new single is "Blow My Mind". A breezy, mellifluous love song, the record should secure sizeable success as the summer approaches. Yet irrespective of whose decision it actually was, the track is a nakedly commercial choice. Containing lyrics like "Pleasure, Passion, tonight's the night I'm looking for your action," it sits uneasily with JK's stated intention "to keep a message in the music so I don't start going on about sweet nothings".



"No," JK says a day later. "I'm not perfect." We're in the dishevelled kitchen of his new Notting Hill flat. Although he's been here for a month, constant demands on his time mean he's barely had time to unpack, and cardboard boxes filled with food still litter the room. Away from the pressures of the studio, he's relaxed, sincere and likeable. So much so that he even smiles at the pitfalls of his loquacity. "It's difficult to explain myself at times, because I'm not as eloquent as I'd like to be. So yeah, I make naive statements in the middle of a rant, but then I'm not a person to try and hide things, I just say what I'm thinking at the time."

At 22, he's still young enough to believe he can change the world. But mature enough to realise the strength of integrity needed to do so. "I think it's good to keep the youth in you, the kid who doesn't assume things or dismiss ideas," he grins. Still, he acknowledges, fulfilling the mountainous expectations now heaped upon Jamiroquai involves considerable pressure. Two years ago, his childhood friend - a talented, experimental techno musician called Ace - committed suicide. His death is now a salutary reminder of the price sometimes exacted by success.

"If he'd continued, he'd have been at the forefront of techno and house, and it was too much for him," reflects JK. "But people fuck up when they ain't happy with themselves and what they're doing. If you keep to the music, make sure you sing from the heart and believe in what you do, then you'll get through."

What choice does he have, after all? He can stick to his guns, open his mouth, allow the to tumble out, but also shout "wake up" at the top of his voice. Or else he simply shrugs his shoulders and churns out more of the candyfloss pop that already clogs the charts. You suspect he'd rather give up altogether instead. And as he'll tell you himself, in a voice too loud to ignore, he's still too young to die.

SUB-SECTION #3: Derrick McKenzie Interviews

Derrick McKenzie has been with Jamiroquai since ROTSC. One of the greatest scenes to ever see him in is a drum solo, sometimes passing over two minutes without stop. All articles are listed from the latest down.

Derrick McKenzie Interview #1 | CNN

June 30th 1999

"Jamiroquai 'Synkronizes' New Album, Tour"

By Donna Freydkin

A rare interview with Derrick on album four and the band's direction



(CNN) - In the retro world of England's Jamiroquai, bubbly disco mingles with slick funk. Smooth jazz cozies up to fluffy pop and polished club music.

Ask the British foursome about its inspirations, and the artists -- led by limelight-loving frontman Jason Kay -- say they know a good thing when they hear it. On Jamiroquai's fourth album "Synkronized," that magic ingredient is the Bee Gees, merged with the boogie beats of disco wonderland Studio 54.

"We believe in disco funk," says drummer Derrick McKenzie. "We're fully into it. We felt we should produce and write music along that sort of line, because at the end of the day, we want to make music that we enjoy."

To create that musical Xanadu, the band -- Kay, McKenzie, keyboardist Toby Smith and vibes player Wallis Buchanan -- holed up at Kay's Georgian manor home outside London.

"We weren't pressed for time," says McKenzie. "You could start and finish when you want. You can work when you want. It's excellent. You're your own boss."

And the final product, says the drummer, is all about getting down and partying like it's -- well, you know.

"That's the message," says McKenzie. "Enjoy. Get out and party. Have a good time. We want to entertain you, but we want to entertain you in our own way."

The first single, "Canned Heat," has been out since late May. The album, which entered the Billboard album charts at 28, is currently perched at 53.

The video was shot by director Jonas Akerlund, who's worked with Madonna, the Prodigy and Metallica. The album as a whole has garnered mixed-to-positive reviews. McKenzie says he hopes the silky beats of "Synkronized" will serve as a breakthrough in the United States for the London-born band.

"Music in England is like clothes. It's a fashion thing," says McKenzie. "But we're still doing the same kind of music we were doing at the beginning. We've just matured."



Boogie-Down Productions

In 1993, when Jamiroquai released its United Kingdom debut, "Emergency on Planet Earth," the British band was dismissed as a one-hit wonder by the Fleet Street press. And although Jamiroquai's debut had hit No. 1 on the British charts and became the U.K.'s top-selling debut album of the year, no one took the band too seriously.

Three years and two albums later, the U.S. audience had scarcely heard of Jamiroquai -- when MTV picked up a funky little ditty called "Virtual Insanity" from Jamiroquai's third album, "Travelling Without Moving."

The album went on to sell seven million copies worldwide, and garnered Jamiroquai a best pop performance Grammy and four MTV Video Music Awards, including a best video nod for the gravity-defying "Virtual Insanity" clip.

"It was actually a good kick in the ass. It was what we needed," says McKenzie. "The fact that MTV picked up 'Virtual Insanity' and played it really heavily was excellent, because it meant that somebody took a risk in putting us on TV and plugging it. And when we went to work on this album, we just thought to ourselves, 'We don't want to let MTV down.'"

Between albums, Kay wrote "Deeper Underground" for the "Godzilla" soundtrack, and the entire band, already bitten by the disco bug, performed a duet of "Upside Down" with Diana Ross at the 1997 Brit Awards.

Disco Inferno

In "Canned Heat," Kay says, "You know this boogie is for real ... nothing left for me to do but dance." In the

bleaker "Black Capricorn Day," he laments that "And I'm so rarely understood. Well, I don't know what they want from me."

"Jay's writing and vocal abilities have been influenced by Stevie Wonder," says McKenzie, "but more at the beginning of his career. But this album is much more Jay, from a vocal point of view, than previous albums. He deliberately stayed away from listening to a bunch of people so he would develop his own style."

Despite a few darker messages, McKenzie says that "Synkronized" is all about dipping into the disco revival -- not to capitalize on bell-bottom nostalgia, but to pay tribute to a genre of music the band loves.

"We're all into the disco thing," he says, "the whole band, and not because there's been a revival. It's because we're genuinely interested in the disco-funk thing. We wanted an up-tempo album that we could party to. Play every track, one after the other, and just enjoy it."

"Synkronized" represents a return for Jamiroquai to its London club-scene roots.

"We're doing that party, clubby, disco thing -- so much so, that we're thinking of doing some really small gigs. That's one of my goals for this year, to do some really small gigs," says McKenzie. "They're a lot more intimate and the people there will be right into it."

He may have chances at that in the U.S. tour, which kicks off on July 4 at San Francisco's Union Square, and includes a stop in the not-so-intimate setting of Woodstock '99 on July 23. McKenzie hopes that being on the road in the States will prove to American audiences what longtime British fans have already bought into.

"We're ourselves now. We know what we do, we know we do it well and we just want it to be us, rather than somebody else," says McKenzie.

Derrick McKenzie Interview #2 | Mail On Sunday's YOU Magazine February 6th 1999

"The Fast Lane Foodies" By Catherine Fenton

An inside look to the hungry life of a drummer

Derrick McKenzie, 34, the drummer of funky pop combo Jamiroquai and Anthea Robson, 27, dental receptionist, moved into a five-bedroomed Victorian house in Muswell Hill, North London, together last September and are expecting their first baby in April.

KITCHEN

The large kitchen-diner has beechwood units, a breakfast counter, AEG gas hob and oven, double sink, big fridge freezer, microwave, Kenwood mixer, blender, juicer and mini juicer. The kitchen end is tiled; the dining area has a wooden floor with a Habitat dining table, Ikea chairs and a sideboard from House Of Fraser.

FRIDGE

Three bottles of champagne, half a bar of chocolate, tub of margarine, fruit juice, bottled water, skimmed milk.

DERRICK SAYS

"We chose a house that we could move straight into - I'm away a lot so I didn't want one that needed anything doing to it. All we did was put in a recording studio at the top of the house for

me and decorate one of the bedrooms in yellow and purple for my six-year-old daughter Jenner, who visits at weekends.

"We love relaxing in the kitchen, but I hardly ever use it for cooking - I don't have the time. I've only cooked once since we moved in, and that was just pasta with a ready-made pesto sauce. If it wasn't for Anthea, I'd live on a diet of Fray Bentos ready meals. I'm no Ainsley Harriot.

"When I'm at home, I get up at 6:30am, go running, then grab some orange juice, cereal and a banana for breakfast. I work in the studio all day, and just make myself a sandwich for lunch. In the evenings, Anthea and I either go out to local restaurants - I love Chinese food - or have a Marks & Spencer ready meal. Sometimes Anthea surprises me with a fish or chicken dish or shepherd's pie.

"At the moment I'm staying at Jay Kay's house in Berkshire during the week, working on the next Jamiroquai album. He has a house manager, Esther, who cooks for us there. The band also spend long stretches of time on tour; when we're in the UK and Europe we have a catering company and in the US we buy take-outs. I like Mexican food in the US and I love the steaks in Argentina, but after a while, I can't wait to get home"

**Derrick McKenzie Interview #3 | Allstar
February 4th 1998**

**"Jamiroquai Delivers 'Godzilla Is A Killer' For Monster Soundtrack"
By Phillip Zonkel**

DM talks more about Jamiroquai's track for the movie Godzilla

While the track listing isn't even close to being confirmed yet, the members of Jamiroquai are quite excited about the track they've submitted for the forthcoming Godzilla movie, "Godzilla is a Killer." Godzilla is due in May via TriStar Pictures, while the Sony Music Soundtrax/ Epic Records soundtrack will precede the movie.

Though nothing's confirmed, Beck is also said to be recording a song for the film, which will star Matthew Broderick and feature special effects courtesy of the team that worked on Stargate and Independence Day.

"The melody of the song reminds me of an old Stevie Wonder track, which I think is off Journey Through the Secret Life of Plants, but a harder version," explains Jamiroquai drummer Derrick McKenzie of "Godzilla is a Killer." "It's got a hooky chorus -- you can definitely remember it. Sony U.K. really likes it... It's got a synthesized bass line, electronic drums, and a bit of guitar."

If the single is picked up, McKenzie anticipates a video, "which will be done in the best possible taste," he says. "My drums getting squashed and the whole thing, and my sliding down [Godzilla's] tail and jumping off the end," he chuckles. "That superhero stuff."

Death-defying stunts aside, the group might show up at the Grammy Awards on Feb. 25 in New York, where they are up for two awards -- Best Pop Performance By a Duo or Group with Vocal for "Virtual Insanity" and Best Pop Album for Travelling Without Moving.

"America is a hard market, especially for British acts," McKenzie says. "To be nominated for a Grammy is excellent for us. This time in 1996, we weren't doing anything. Nobody wanted to play the songs, nobody wanted to buy the record. It was so difficult. Within 16 months or something,

we've gone from nothing to a Grammy nomination. We really appreciate the American support. And to be asked to do a film track by an American film company is really good."

**Derrick McKenzie Interview #4 | Allstar
December 30th 1997
"Jamiroquai Goes Electronic For Godzilla Movie?"
By Phillip Zonkel**

DM talks about Jamiroquai's new foray into electronic music for the upcoming movie Godzilla

As Jamiroquai experiences life in the fast lane, band member Derrick McKenzie, calling from his car phone while stuck in London rush hour, needs to find the offramp. "I can't talk and drive at the same time. I'll get in trouble by the police," says the 33-year-old drummer. "I've just pulled over, so it'll be alright now."

As McKenzie puts the car in park, it sounds like he'll be shifting into high gear for Jamiroquai's next musical destination. "I've been itching to write some new material, going the electronic route mixed together with live drumming," says McKenzie, who co-writes the band's melodies. "[It's a] Jamiroquai meets the Chemical Brothers or Jamiroqui meets Prodigy type thing. I'm going to try to put that forward for the Godzilla movie [opening Memorial Day 1998] and see if they like it. If they like it, they can have it."

**Derrick McKenzie Interview #5 | Cosmic World
March 26th 1997
"Derrick McKenzie"**

DM talks about his musical influences and a few of his favorite things

Where were you born?

Born in Royal Free Hospital in Essex Rd, Islington when it was there back on the 27th March 1962.

Where did you go to school?

My School was in Tottenham, North London behind the Spurs football ground and that was called Northumberland Park School.

How did you become involved with Jamiroquai?

I became involved with Jamiroquai after listening to the first album and after listening to it 20 million times, I got a call from Simon Law, the funky ginger, and he asked me, sorry, told me! he had put my name forward for the audition. After two auditions and 6 and a half hours later I actually got the job.

When / where / how did you learn to play your instrument?

I learnt to play my instrument at home on my mothers chairs and on telephone books. Because my mum would not buy me a drum kit I made use of what I had around me.

Who are your main musical influences?

My main musical influences are, Harvey Mason, Billy Cobham, Early Incognito, Level 42, Lots of

music from the mid 70's to mid 80's on the Jazz Funk and Jazz tip.

Who are your influences in life?

My influences in life are my mum and dad, my daughter Jenner, my ex-girlfriend/baby's mum/good friend, my good good friend John Smith - God rest his soul - and all the good drummers of our time.

What is best Jamiroquai memory?

My best Jamiroquai memory is when I did my first gig with them and I had to have my forearm sprayed with Ralgex because I was playing the drums so hard.

Do you have any favourite Jamiroquai gigs? Why?

The most memorable Jamiroquai gig is when I played the Zenith in front of 11,500 people which is one of my biggest ever gigs. Why? Because you just don't know how people are going to react at that moment when you do your first few bars.

Favourite Things:

Car

My favourite car is Mr and Mrs Dickens E320 Cabriolet Mercedes

Clothes

Anything that looks good on me from any clothing company

Bands

Bands vary, from bands like Oasis, Blur to Instant Funk, MFSB. BT Express, Eric Clapton, Van Halen, basically anything and everything that's good.

Shops

Any shop that sells good records like Soul Brother Records, any clothes shop down the Kings Rd.

Magazines

Any health magazine and fashion magazine.

Clubs

Riki Tiks, Bagleys, Ministry of Sound, Hanover Ground and The Complex and

Subterania

Cities

Tokyo, New York, London, Hamburg

What are your aspirations and goals?

My aspirations and goals are to have a healthy, successful life and a happy loving family with a big house and a studio to work in.

What do you enjoy most about being in the band?

I enjoy touring the most and meeting people after gigs.

**SUB-SECTION #4:
Toby Smith Interviews**

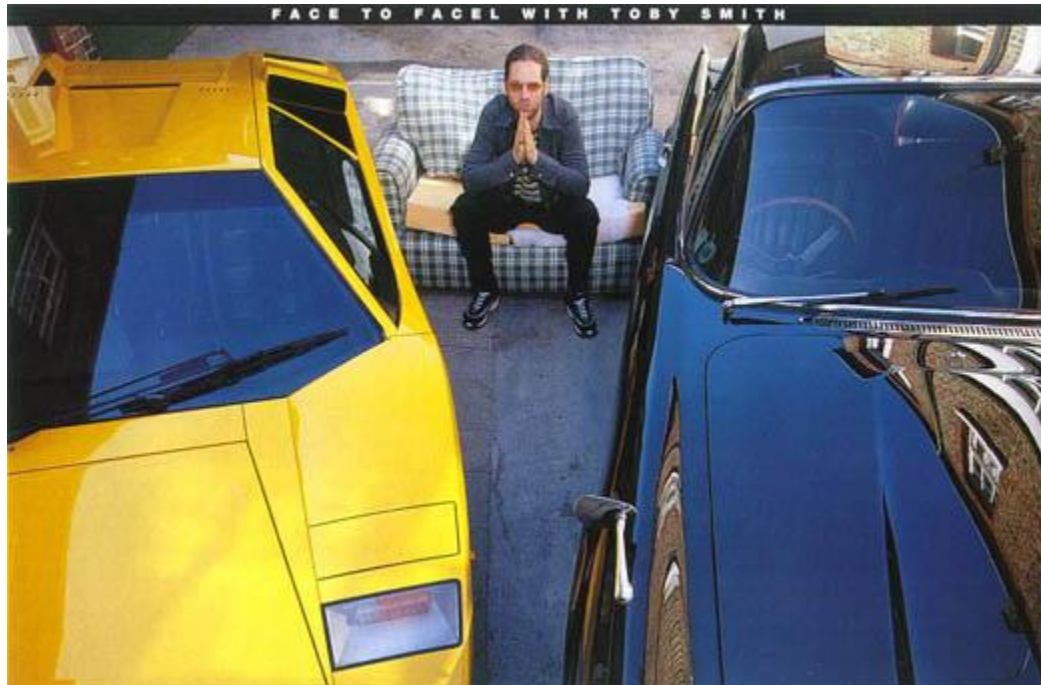
Toby Smith has been with the band since the beginning as both musician and part song writer. A great keysman and always corny straight man, he seems to enjoy being outside the limelight. All articles are listed from the latest down.

Toby Smith Interview #1 | Top Gear

July 1999

“Face To Face With Toby Smith” By Andy Wilman

A chat with the true kamikaze car driver of Jamiroquai.



Whereas everything in Jay's garage is designed to help him lose his licence, it's more measured at the London home of Toby Smith, keyboard player and fellow songwriting partner in Jamiroquai. As Toby throws back the garage doors, sunlight floods in on two immaculately maintained cars which, side by side, score highly in the chalk and cheese department.

The first is a yellow Lamborghini Countach, the second, one of the beautiful cars ever made, a Facel Vega 2. "I'd been after one of these for ages and I had to fly to Germany with 30 grand in cash to get it," says Toby of the French classic. "The car was owned by this eccentric German and I was told if he didn't like me he wouldn't sell it. He didn't speak a word of English -and it's quite hard to mime that you're a really nice guy."

We stare inside at the huge dash-mounted levers, which wouldn't look out of place on Flash Gordon's spaceship. What exactly do they do? "Nothing," says Toby after a few moments' reflection. "I think one of them does something with a bit of warm air..."

Alongside the Facel Vega and Countach may seem an odd choice. This particular Lamborghini, after all, has a reputation today for being as tasteful as an arm dealer's bedroom. But this is precisely why Toby has gone for an original 1975 model, which, as he points out, is still an outrageous car, but nevertheless a typical work of beauty from the Italians. Only, he feels, when the silly arches and spoilers appeared on the Anniversary did the car begin to deserve its vulgarity tag.

Despite coming across as a bit more considered in his vehicle buying habits, Toby is nevertheless quite capable of flying the Jamiroquai flag for kamikazi driving. Until recently he owned a Skyline: "But I had to sell it or I would have killed myself," he says. "One time, in the early hours of the morning, I was demonstrating how clever its chassis was to some mates and I said 'Look, you can do anything with the wheel and it won't lose it..." Toby then had to sit there, gently munching one his words as it careered off for a wallop with some road furniture.

"Later on," he adds, "The dealer told me I should have put on the power to make the car drive itself out of trouble. Well, that would have been fine on the track but it's pretty hard when you're going around Hyde Park Corner."

As I'm leaving Toby's, I spot a knackered old VW camper van tucked away in the corner. "I bought it last year, and it is just the ultimate love wagon," he says, laughing as his blushing girlfriend moves in to silence him. "In fact, our baby daughter was conceived in that van. We parked it on the penis of Cerne Abbas, that big chalk man, to get the fertility vibes and..." Oh no, now he's at it as well.

Toby Smith Interview #2 | Radio One May 1997

"Pre-Show Interview: Toby Smith" By Lisa Of Radio One

Broadcast interview with Toby Smith before the Finsbury Park concert, was recorded before a performance in Dallas.

Toby - I'm Toby Smith, and I'm the keyboardist for Jamiroquai

Lisa - OK, so set the scene.. where are we right now. What's about to happen

Toby - Where in Dallas and where about to do the smallest gig we have done... for about 4 and a half years.. lets say. 600 people.. its very small, its gonna be alot of fun.. very swissy, and you gotta check these gigs cause it don't happen often, and it probably won't happen for a long time. We did one in Seattle, as well.. which was like 800 people.. together on the same trip.. very sweaty.. very cool

Lisa - Do you miss that intimacy

Toby - Very Refreshing

Lisa - Do you miss that intimacy, yeah

Toby - Yeah you do, you really do. I mean, the big gigs are cool.. You get the luxury of better sounds and stuff, but you don't feel it the same way that you do in a small theme, and you can hear the P.A.. the P.A is right next to you, and you can feel it a lot more.. it does make a big difference

Lisa - Finsbury Park is gonna be over 35,000 people

Toby - (Toby laughs)

Lisa - How are you going to create that kind of intimacy.. I mean, do you hope to or are you...

Toby - Err.. I think we are managing to now. we have been doing it for a bit now. The last couple of tours have been all over 10,000.. so you start to work out what it is that gives a really good gig to the people, and to yourself.. you know.. You see the thing is, if your not enjoying yourself on the stage, then that is just gonna rub off, and so you have to first make sure things are good on stage, that it feels good, that you are enjoying yourself, and then worry about everyone else.. because if you just.. you have to, it just doesn't work..

Lisa - On top of that, do you still bear in mind, like the people right at the back or the left side of the stage

Toby - Yeah, well I mean, I think from the last U.K, we did the Arena Tour, and I think.. everybody I spoke to, you know.. said "It does not matter how far back they were, that the sound was good, and I think we have sorted out the sound now, so that's the case. You got Big P.A's, all round.. front and rear.. so everyone, either your right at the back, your gonna feel exactly the same thing as at the front. You just can't see as much, but in the arena's, were gonna have these two massive screens, and so, that kind of enables people to see what is going on

Lisa - Feel closer

Toby - Yeah, it would look really good as well, actually.. does look cool

Lisa - But with the territory, there goes a certain amount of recognition.. how do you cope with fame (You hear Jay, in the background, rehearsing his voice)

Toby - I don't get recognised in the street.. I plan it that way. I don't wanna get recognised in the street. I wanna just chill, do my thing, and have good time on stage and after stage, people like.. "Arrrgghh.. great" you know, but as soon as I am in the street, I am at home.. I'm me, I have not changed for whatever..27 years.. so, that's how I like it

Lisa - So your not about to changed (Jay's rehearsing voice becomes louder)

Toby - I mean even Jay, who you can hear now.. breezing his way down here.. even he can still walk around, once he has taken his hat off (Toby starts humming to Jay's, rehearsing)

Lisa - So this is Jay warming up

Toby - Yeah...

Lisa - Before he goes on..

Toby - Yeah.....

Jay - With no bloody voice

Lisa - Your talking about the sound and everything, I mean.. that obviously is an important factor.. visually, I mean, it is not as if you guys go on stage with sort of outfits, or anything

Toby - No, he (Jay) is such a performer, that people can't actually avert there eyes away from him, for very long.. so, erm, we kind of get on with our own things. I'm sitting down, so I can't exactly get up and do soul spins every five seconds, but erm, I think, you know, people who come to the shows, theirs alot going on.. musically, it is so dense, that if you got bored musically, that, you know.. you can have a little wonder around

Lisa - He is a frontman and he obviously gets all the attention because of that, I mean.. how do you feel about that

Toby - Well, you know.. Jay is a superb performer.. and a amazing frontman, and as a result of that, that he has made Jamiroquai what it is, really.. so, it is not a problem for me. What I want out of this band is to write, which I do.. and to enjoy myself.. which I do. That's it

Lisa - Tell us about life on the road.. there's quite a few of you travelling together.. (Jay practising again in the background) I mean, does it get intense in certain ways

Toby - Err.. some tours do, some don't. This one's been, actually.. really relaxed, probably because the first place we went to was Vancouver.. and we had two days off, and we got a car.. went into the mountains.. up to the snowline, and the next day we hired some boats and just cruised around, you know, this is like killer whale territory, which is awesome.. You don't have the chance to do that when you going around Europe, in a bus.. So that has been cool. We have tried to, you know, as much as possible, use the days were your not doing something, to go out and do something and this country is amazing as a country. You know, its beautiful, its very cool.. this one has been, on the whole, very good.. some are bad, some are good. At the moment, this is good

Lisa - You've passed the third difficult album stage, it goes on to the fourth and fifth

Toby - Easy...

Lisa - Yeah..

Toby - Yeeaah..

Lisa - Do you feel that..

Toby - Yeaahh.. and we will relish it, love that.. that's the best bit

Jay - Yeah, but your not the one who has got to write the lyrics (Toby chuckles)

Toby - (In a foreign accent) Yeah, but I have no worries, I have no problems with you writing lyrics, right

Lisa - So how does it work, for those of you who do not know, tell us how it works

Toby - Oh, well we will be giving away all the secrets away, can't do that

Lisa - No, come on.. you can tell me

Toby - Well, last time.. usually what we have done is just gone into the main studio, sat.. and just got on with it, and the last album, we had 4 or 5 weeks pre-production, in Jay's flat, but we got the meet, on the last album, together.. and this time, hopefully, we will have a little more pre-production.. and, fingers crossed, Jay's gonna buy a lovely "Big house in the country", which will be packed full of pucker recording studio's, so we are just gonna chill there.. and its gonna, I think people are gonna defiantly, like, there gonna know, there gonna know with the next album

Lisa - Before going on stage, do you guys do anything to prepare..

Toby - I find this quite frustrating, cause I play keyboards.. I don't have any, not so nice user friendly instruments, for me to warm up on, so there are very few exercises for your fingers, you know..

Lisa - And there is nothing as a gro.. (Toby interrupts)

Toby - Theirs one.. you know.. which you can.. err

Lisa - There's nothing as a group (Lisa chuckles) that you go all and do

Toby - No, I don't think so. None of us are into that kind of hold hands and "YEAH, COME ON BABY, WERE GONNA YEAH".. none of that.. no, were not really into that. Were just people who.. Sola will be doing his percussion, Martin on the trumpet, Jay does his, as you heard, he will be doing his vocals exercise, and I just sit, get quite annoyed and jealous that I just can't pick up a flute, do something (Toby imitates a flute). I'm getting ready (Lisa laughs)

Lisa - So, what about when you come off stage..

Toby - Its so dependant on the crowd for me. If crowd are really good, I come off, I'm really late and if there we not so good.. Different crowds do different things. Some crowds will kind of suck from me.. take all the energy.. and some crowds will give loads to you.. if they have taken, then I usually come off and I gotta go find a very quiet place, and just disappear away from everybody.. and if there really givvey, then I am just buzzing, so give!!!

Lisa - What's your favourite Jamiroquai tune

Toby - Err.. oh damn, I love.. of this album, its probably ALRIGHT. Its just got a vibe about it. Its just very.. its just... ALRIGHT

**Toby Smith Interview #3 | Keyboard Review
May 1997**

"Alright...Jamiroquai's Keysman Toby Smith"

By Sam Molineaux

"They're definitely not part of the Britpop scene... Sam Molineaux finds out that these quirky retro funk boys owe more to Uncle Sam than Old Blighty for their musical influences..."

They're definitely not part of the Britpop scene... Sam Molineaux finds out that these quirky retro funk boys owe more to Uncle Sam than Old Blighty for their musical influences...

It's a sunny afternoon on the streets of San Francisco, and the word is that Jamiroquai are in town. There has been an underground buzz for a few weeks, following the January US release of the band's third album, 'Travelling Without Moving', and the first US single from it, Cosmic Girl, but no-one's really that sure who they are or where they've come from... No wonder. With their strongly American-influenced '70s sound, you could be forgiven for thinking they were native-born, raised on a strict diet of Stevie Wonder and P-funk. Even their name is taken from a native American tribe -- the Iroquois. But these boys are English, in their mid-20s and relative newcomers to the US-flavoured sound they've adopted as their own.

Of course, this isn't their first visit to the States, but this time round there's a new vibe, a stronger more assured sound from an album that shows none of the hesitancy and discomposure of the previous 'Return Of The Space Cowboy'. Outside the famous Bimbos Club in Fishermans Wharf the fans clearly know what to expect. Crowds of kids have gathered, many dressed in the baggy flares and big 'Dr Seuss' hats made fashionable by the band's outrageous frontman, Jay Kay, perhaps eager to get their first live taste of this new retro funk. Jamiroquai are sound checking -- wah-wah keys and deep funky bass leak out into the late afternoon air.

Alternative to Britpop

Formed five years ago in London, the band's first fruit was the distinctive When You Gonna Learn, an instant hit which led to them signing an eight-album deal with Sony. Their first album, 'Emergency On Planet Earth', showcasing this hit and the follow-up, We're Too Young To Die, went storming straight to the top of the UK album charts, assuring success in a market overflowing with Beatles soundalikes.

"We're definitely not a part of the Britpop thing," assures Toby Smith, keyboard player and one half of the Jamiroquai writing partnership. "We do pretty much American black music. All the artists we listen to are black Americans: Roy Ayres, Herbie Hancock, Marvin Gaye, Donald Byrd, that sort of genre. I was late into this stuff, though -- I'm 26 now and I met Jay when I was 22. I hadn't really ever been into that music up until then. It was all house and then before that I was into rock -- David Bowie, Hendrix and stuff. So when I started writing with Jay I was right in at the deep end, but it was good in a way because I wasn't saturated in that type of music so it gave a different angle."

As the son of jazz singer Karen Kay, and having spent a good proportion of his childhood on the road with his mother, both in Britain and in America, Jay Kay was more attuned to the sort of music he aspired towards creating, and with the keyboard skills and musicianship of Toby Smith added to the equation, Jamiroquai have achieved success while bands like The Brand New Heavies and the Young Disciples have remained in the wings. "The whole point of Jamiroquai is Jay," says Smith, somewhat modestly. "He's the difference, you know, because it's the '90s, he's a young guy, he dances the way he dances and he says what he says -- that's what makes us different from the others."

But it would be unfair not to credit Smith with much of Jamiroquai's distinctive sound. As well as writing half the music, and providing the musical support for Kay's vocal and melodic ideas, his keyboard contribution is

paramount to their sound. For this, he uses mostly traditional jazz/funk electronic pianos and hands-on programmable synths.

Bargain gear

"What's the point of a synthesiser that you can't synthesise with? If you want a trumpet, go and get someone to play the trumpet. Analogue synths are there to create new sounds, and it's the sounds that do it for me," he insists. "On stage I've got a Fender Rhodes and a Hohner Clavinet; then I've got a new Yamaha CS1x which is like a programmable analogue digital synth, a Nord Lead and a Moog Source. Obviously for live stuff, the analogue synths I use have to have programs -- originally, I played with a Mini-Moog, but it was just a nightmare because I could never get there in time to change the sounds between one tune and the next. So the Moog I'm using now has 16 programs which is very cool."

Smith uses the Suitcase 88 version of the Fender Rhodes, but complaints from disgruntled roadies meant he had to make certain modifications. "I had to take the bottom bit -- the amplifier -- off, because the roadies got so fed up with carting it around. It was only a glorified stand anyway because I wasn't using it. So now I've got this little box which takes a direct out, including all the vibrato and tone controls, which makes it a lot easier. I also use an Electric Mistress phaser and a wah-wah pedal on the Fender. For the rest of the stuff I use an Ibanez Autowah which gives a great '70s sound. It has an auto filter which produces this wow-wow-wow sort of sound. Then I've got delay on the Moog. I have all my keyboards plugged into an in-line mixer, a rackmount thing, so I can mix my own monitor which is important as I've got six instruments on the go a lot of the time." For piano sounds, however, he makes an exception to his anti-digital rule. "Actually, I use a Yamaha P150; it's definitely the best-sounding piano I could find. I ended up using it on the album, too. We wrote Virtual Insanity on it and when we went into the studio to record the song properly I tried it on a Steinway and on a Bechstein, but it just wasn't happening, so I stuck with the Yamaha.

"The Moog Source I found in Canada. It was \$100! I've just got an Oberheim OB1 which I bought yesterday in LA. I had a field day in Japan, too -- in every city, I go off and explore the music shops."

Live and kicking

One of the things that sets Jamiroquai apart from many of their contemporaries is their insistence on the importance of playing live -- and always without the aid of sequencers or tape backing tracks. As a result, the stage is pretty crowded, with an expanded band of ten players which includes a horn section, didgeridoo player and a live DJ "scratching on the side". But with such a keyboard-led sound, and only the one keyboard player, it does mean that Smith has to reduce down his keyboard part to cover just the important bits. "On the albums there are a lot of keyboard overdubs. That's a problem live because I've only got two hands! I have to choose the most important line and distil down what people aren't going to miss."

Messing about with their own arrangements is fine, but what really riles them is other people remixing their tracks. It's no secret that David Morales' remix of their earlier hit Return Of The Space Cowboy rescued the sales of their second album -- it was one of the biggest dance club hits of '95 -- but they were unhappy with his treatment of the track.

"We've been unfortunate. At the moment, especially in London, all they play in the clubs is house stuff, which means it's difficult to get our stuff played in clubs, except for alternative clubs. So you have to get these remixes, but the ones that we happen to have had done have been really cheesy. The Space Cowboy one was just cheese, and totally unmusical. David Morales has just done a remix of Cosmic Girl, too, but this time it's a lot better. We also invited Todd Terry to do a remix of it because he'd done the Everything But The Girl remix which

was okay -- it worked, but he obviously spent less than two hours doing ours. It's... no comment. It's just a shame that the record companies feel they have to use these remixes; that they can't sell our singles on their own merits."

Even so, their latest album 'Travelling Without Moving' is selling on its own merit. With a tighter sound than the previous two albums and a sharply distinctive funky flavour (they sound even more like Stevie Wonder circa 1973-4 this time), it doesn't look set to move from the Top 40 for some time yet. So what set this album apart from the previous two? "As the band has grown, we've grown as musicians, attempting to find a sound that's really us. I would say that the latest album is a bit of a departure from the last one. The first album did really well -- we were fresh and it was very easy; there wasn't any pressure. But the second album, Jay had a few problems getting it together. He lost his concentration and it was all a bit hurried -- never felt grounded. This time though we had some time for pre-production. Just Jay and I in his studio for a month with a little drum kit and a couple of Tascam DA88s, where we sat down and really got things together. We sketched out about five of the tunes and we were able to think about the direction of the album much more. We had in our minds that we wanted to go the next rung up the ladder and try and get it that much bigger, to get access to more people."

Funky formula

Well, they've certainly done that. In the UK alone, 'Travelling Without Moving' was ranked as the fifteenth top-selling album of '96, despite its September release. With two singles from the album having already outsold any of the singles from the previous album, early April sees the release of a third to coincide with their subsequent UK dates: the heavily keyboard-flavoured number, Alright -- a tune which Smith claims took just five minutes to write. "The troublesome tunes will happen over weeks, but the good ones will take only five minutes. On this album, nearly every tune happened very quickly -- me or Jay would come up with the idea and, bosh, the tune was there. When we had to record them, you have to overdub; that's what takes time -- getting them on tape."

For now, though, Smith is looking forward to the final European leg of their world tour, and he's already formulating ideas for their next album, which he claims is going to feature more programming with a bit more of a club feel, still with the funky vibe, though -- "more sort of early-'80s P-funk". When they return from the States, they're booked in the studio to record the theme music for ITV's new Formula One show -- a consolidation of their passion for music and fast cars -- both Jay Kay and Toby Smith have Ferraris and Lamborghinis in their car collections.

If tonight's performance at Bimbos is anything to go by, they may be travelling but they sure are moving; fusing all the energy of British music with the best of America's recent past, and coming up with a formula that's fresh, funky and solid, unrivalled by any other current live act on either side of the Atlantic. Alright!

Toby Smith Interview #4 | Keyboard February 1997 "Quaveringly Quantized On A Quasar" By Kyle Swenson

A look back at Toby Smith's musical roots, with detailed information about the equipment he uses live and for recordings



If you were to be blindfolded at a Jamiroquai show as the band kicked into their third album's opening song, "Virtual Insanity," you might think one of the roadies snuck Stevie Wonder onstage to sing. Take off the blindfold and you'll see a 27-year-old dance-crazed light-skinned British guy named Jay Kay. He sings about saving the earth and coos about meeting girls from quasi-stellar neighborhoods; Jamiroquai will throw your expectations for a loop.

Style Exposure. *Five years ago, keyboardist Toby Smith joined singer Jason (Jay) Kay to concoct the funky stew that is Jamiroquai. Both grew up under the influences of jazz. Jay spent his rug-rat years traveling with his jazz-singing mother Karen Kay. And although the record companies weren't overly supportive, Toby's father tried his luck singing in college. "My dad was in jazz," says Toby. "It was like a three-piece band. So I had that influence around me, but when I went to school I got into house music." Although Toby began classical training before he could reach the piano pedals, he took some time to find his musical niche. "I was at school and I was in a band, kind of a Hendrix blues band. I played bass rather than keyboards. And then I heard some house music in '88, when it started kicking in, and I said, 'This is easy. I can do this.'" While cooling down from his involvement in the London house scene, Toby realized his appreciation for funk music and analog synthesizers. "I started doing the type of music that I love, that I aspire to now, like Marvin Gaye, Donald Byrd, Stevie, Herbie Hancock." He ditched his old Roland D-70 and Korg M1 for some even older and newer toys with knobs and filters.*

On tour Toby brings his Moog Source, Hohner Clavinet, Novation BassStation, Yamaha CS1x, and Fender Rhodes 88, mixing up his smooth piano chord rhythms with cartoonish analog space bleeps. Attached to his Rhodes are an Electro-Harmonix Electric Mistress phaser and a wah-wah pedal. To appease the roadies, Toby took his Rhodes 88 stage model on tour without the speaker cabinet. "I also bought a Mutron," says Toby, "which is like a bass effects pedal, but I can use it on one of the keyboards as well, maybe on the Clav to get a really enveloppy 'bow-wow' sort of thing."

Vintage Collector. *Why did Toby dump the digital gear to go the way of the Moog? "Because they sound so much better. I just prefer the sculptural ability of getting the sounds; there's something simple about it." At home, his catalog of analog includes two Moog Sources, Sequential Circuits Prophet-T8 ("the supreme mother of synths"), Memorymoog, ARP Odyssey and 2600, Roland SH-101 and SH-7, and a Minimoog, "which I didn't use so much, because it was buggin'." Toby's obsession with vintage doesn't end with synthesizers. Like Jay, he owns*

a slew of old cars, one being a 1968 orange Lamborghini Miura. Unfortunately, says Toby, Jay hasn't been able to drive any of his eight classic roadsters since his license was recently revoked for speeding.

Two-Hand Dilemma. *The guys will be too busy to drive for a while. The European tour began in Dublin last October where Toby promptly came down with tonsillitis. Shortly after, Jay managed to get shingles, and the band had to cancel eight shows. But before Keyboard's press time, all 11 members of the band (including didjeridooist Wallis Buchanan, bassist Stuart Zender, drummer Derrick McKenzie, Toby, and Jay) had planned a tour in Europe, Japan, and Australia, after which they'll fly to the U.S. in February for stateside gigs. Even with all those people crammed on stage, Toby is solely responsible for the keyboard parts, and from listening to Jamiroquai's third album, *Travelling Without Moving*, it's clear that there's a whole lot for him to accomplish live. "It gets a bit tricky, 'cause I've got two hands, haven't I? Most of the time it's all right. The strings I have the DJ play. We have a DJ who plays various aspects of the album on vinyl." The string parts were arranged by Simon Hale, who assembled 12 string players and translated Jay's vocal ideas into parts for violins, violas, and cellos.*

Live Freakiness. *Jamiroquai is known for getting nutty onstage. Toby even goes so far as to say they can be amateurish. In Naples, Italy, the band had a bizarre reaction from the crowd. "When we played in Naples, that was quite magic actually. In the show, once we'd gone off in the encore, everybody starting singing. They picked a note and it just grew into this fat chord. And it is quite mad when you've gone off backstage and you just hear it started off like a note -- and this is 6,000 people. Then we went back up onstage; it was in D. So we just grooved while they were still singing the note. This was lucky, because we did a cover called "Turn Off the Lights," which we play in D, so we just slipped that tune in while they were still singing."*

Acid-funk-jazz-disco-hop? *Although Jay doesn't actually play an instrument (he tried the flute for a while), he and Toby sit down, put their heads together, and construct music. "If it's a brass idea, [Jay will] sing it to the brass and the brass will play it," says Toby. This time around, the band collaborated with the Mad Professor on the reggae tune "Drifting Along," and with M Beat on the jungle-esque "Do You Know Where You're Coming From?" Aside from Jamiroquai's dabbling into new styles, categorizing the band has to be an interesting feat for radio music directors and Billboard chart managers. "We don't fit into any radio format. It's not black R&B; it's not guitar indie," says Toby. Not only is the band having a hard time fitting into a musical niche, they're also dealing with attacks from critics about political beliefs, particularly Jay's.*

Remember Toby and Jay's classic car fetish? Jay's got a few Ferraris stored away, and has been criticized for spouting off about ecological issues as he's speeding off to the next gas station; people can't quite connect the two obsessions. "Yeah, he's very outspoken about it and he's speaking from a layman's point of view," says Toby. "Personally, I don't know what the fuss is about. What Jay says is true. It's things some people know and some people don't know. For the third album we've kind of put that aside a bit, the ecological things. It's meant to be a much more boogie, party album with more disco tracks on it, more funky."

With that haunting bastard-son-of-Stevie voice, and with Jay and Toby directing dozens of colorful instrumental parts, why complain about the amount of chrome and leather in their garage? Jamiroquai can wear clown makeup and eat haggis/lutefisk casseroles onstage, so long as they keep dishing out the funky stuff.

Toby Smith Interview #5 | Jam Music

February 5th 1997

"Jazz Funk Band Fronted By Volatile Singer"

Originally intended to be an interview with Jay Kay, but instead, Toby does the honors

Members of British jazz-funk group Jamiroquai settle down for an interview but it's apparent one of them is missing.

Engaging in some rock star-ish behavior, Jason Kay, the enigmatic frontman with the voice like Stevie Wonder, has stormed off, refusing to do anymore interviews.

"We can probably answer any questions you want to know about J.K. because at the end of the day, we all write the music," says Toby Smith, the soft-spoken, pony-tailed keyboardist who's been playing with Jamiroquai since the band's inception in 1992.

The outspoken and sometimes outlandish antics of J.K. have rendered him the media darling -- and lately the favorite whipping boy of the quintet.

"We've had to be careful about what we say. The British press like to build people up and then knock them off their box," says Smith.

Signing with Sony in 1993 after their hit underground single When You Gonna Learn, the U.K. band received glowing accolades for their first two albums.

J.K.'s lyrics pack a message, whether it's regarding racism or the environment. But the volatile singer can be hot and cold when issues come up in interviews, much to the embarrassment and grief of his record company handlers on this visit to Toronto.

Now, after performing in four cities in five days and battling the media along the way, Jamiroquai's leader had had enough, though he did show up for a gig in a Toronto club where the band played cut from their new album, Travelling Without Moving.

Looking like a hundred pounds wet, wearing a recycled ski jacket circa 1976 and his trademark fake fur hat pulled down over his eyes, J.K.'s stage power was undeniable. As he led into the title track from the band's second release, Return of the Space Cowboy, the politically outspoken singer broke into one of his hallmark asides.

"All of the people who want to live in peace and harmony sit down and have a smoke, this song's for you," he screamed, referring to a large cloud of marijuana smoke forming over the audience.

In the crowd, twenty-something fans emulated J.K.'s style, grooving their similarly toque-adorned heads to Jamiroquai's '90s fusion of '70s funk.

"They're like the Bob Marley of acid jazz," squealed Michelle, a 22-year-old self-described raver and devout fan.

While the environment and social issues have remained constant themes through the band's albums, Travelling Without Moving incorporates reggae, jungle and house beats, adding a world flavor to the music.

"We didn't want to be just another enviro-band," says bassist Stuart Zender, musing over the fall of past groups like Midnight Oil who followed the path of consciousness while their popularity waned.

The next album will mark another change in direction, he added.

"We're listening to lots of '80s electro-music with fat chords so our sound will naturally progress in that direction."

**Toby Smith Interview #6 | Cosmic World
1996**

"Toby Smith Interview" By Cosmic World

A rare Q & A session with Toby Smith on his past and the future.

1) Where were you born?

Born in Queen Charlotte Street Hospital, London, 1970, 29th October.

2) Where did you go to school?

Went to boarding school in Wiltshire & Oxford. 2 terms at Manchester University. Gave up after I spent more time studying Raves and making chillums and bongs out of carrots.

3) How did you get involved with Jamiroquai?

Met Jay through a mutual friend who was managing Jay in Autumn 1992.

4) When / Where / How did you learn to play your instruments?

Aged 5 heard friend playing the piano - demanded to learn piano from my parents. Studied classical music first - this lead to jazz (Oscar Peterson, etc). Dad was in a band at University with Dudley Moore on piano - my Dad sang. They made 2 records for fun. Did all my grades, etc.. - got my grade 8 on piano at 13. Also played viola & guitar. Got into a Jimi Hendrix type band at school called "The Purple Hoover" playing bass. Left school and started clubbing in London '87/'88, lots of House music! Realised it was very easy to make and I'd been producing already at school on a 4 track. Made my first record when I was 17 (a shit House tune!) then got a deal with London records (FFrr), called myself "Kleptomaniacs" (a diss to everyone stealing everyone else's music in the industry). Met Jay. Met funk. Found a whole new musical direction. So even though I was a late comer to Funk, it helped me, in my view, because I wasn't too influenced and could approach writing with Jay from a fresh perspective, not too bogged down with other influences.

5) Who are your main musical influences?

Herbie Hancock (Manchild, Secrets) Marvin Gaye (I Want You, In Our Lifetime, Here My Dear) P Funk (1976-1983) Donald Bird (Places & Spaces)

6) Who are your main influences in life?

Well, my music teacher at my first school (called Sally), animals (my dog, "Wolfie"), cars, girls I've loved, girls I love, my parents, Magic Mushrooms!

7) What is your best Jamiroquai memory?

Recording first single in major recording studio, "Too Young To Die" and it entering the chart at 12. Proved to record company we could do it, and without a producer or any external influences.

8) Do you have any favourite Jamiroquai gigs?

The last one I do.

9) Favourite Things:

Clothes - My "Hang Ten" stripey T-shirt

Bands - Earth Wind & Fire, Parliament, Kool & The Gang

Shops - Auctions

Magazines - Classic & Sportscar

Countries - Finland, Spain & Italy

Places to go - Windmill vegetarian restaurant (Fulham Broadway), Trance parties in the countryside by friends called, "The Little People"

Cities - Paris, Chicago, San Francisco, Milan & Hamburg

10) What are your aspirations and goals?

To write and perform songs that will stand the test of time, to fulfil spiritual aims for this lifetime and find true love (maybe I've found it already).

11) What do you enjoy most about being in a band?

The wedge! Ha Ha Ha - no, not really. The strength of being in a band with friends with common goals and the World that is revealed as a result.

12) If you had 3 wishes what would they be? *Wishes - First, for everyone to spiritually evolve to the next level of perception and awareness, so we could banish self importance and realise the truth of the World - that it is only a dream.. Second, Find Love Third, Stay In Love.*

Third, Buy a big house in the country (That's if the first one isn't possible)

The Future

Superconductivity *should be sorted out so we can have free energy. This has already been done but won't be used because of the light bulb philosophy, i.e. people are making so much money from people buying new light bulbs that they won't make one that will last for ever. Instead of spending all that money on defence, work out a way to sort out nuclear fusion (not fission). For those who don't know, that is the nuclear joining of Oxygen atoms and Hydrogen atoms to make lots and lots of lovely cheap energy. And the waste product? WATER! Yeah, cool! And all the oxygen and hydrogen we need can be got from electrolysis of water. Nearly perpetual energy. With that sorted, energy would be virtually free, and we could live in a cleaner society*

with greed banished (think about it - no oil, no coal, no gas - all of these are the biggest industries in the World - all redundant).

Nanotechnology is going to take a massive part in our lives as is artificial intelligence. If these 2 things could be made to work in the right way, the planets problems could be solved. Artificial Intelligence is going to grow and accelerate exponentially and self-learning computers have already started to teach other computers to learn. Soon it will be reality that computers will be far more intelligent than humans, so with the help of nanotechnology, which engineers at the atomic level, we will have the answers and the machines to solve a lot of the World's ailments. Maybe!

**Toby Smith Interview #7 | Daily Mirror
October 27th 1994**

**“Back Down To Earth: Jamiroquai Have Their Feet On The Ground”
By Louise Johncox**

Toby talks about his relationship with Jay and the current state of the music industry

Toby Smith enjoys listening to music on a Saturday night - as long as it's not Whigfield's hit single of the same name.

"I don't like Whigfield and all that rubbish because it's such a gimmick," says Jamiroquai's 23-year-old keyboard player.

"Unfortunately there is always a market for those kind of tracks but it's the total opposite of what we do.

Raw. The London-based group, who topped the album chart with their debut, Emergency on Planet Earth, pride themselves on their home-grown funky sound and reject the accusation that they have exploited black culture.

"It's ridiculous to say we are a white band ripping off black music," says Toby. "Our music is a combination of styles - a mix of Latin, classical and black music." For the second album, The Return of the Space Cowboy, which entered the charts at No. 2 this week, the band were keen to adopt a raw sound.

We wanted to capture the live sound of four guys playing in a studio," says Toby.

So we went to a down-market studio in Camden as we didn't need a load of mod cons to produce that effect. One piece of percussion we used was a wooden box with grooves in it." As Jamiroquai embark on a new tour, Toby is content to take a back seat, leaving the spotlight firmly on Jay Kaye [sic], the band's controversial singer.

"It suits me to be at the back of the stage with my keyboards," admits Toby, who co-writes the band's music with Jay.

"It takes the pressure off me. I don't particularly want to be in the limelight acting like a chimp on stage. I'd rather leave that to Jay."

*When Jamiroquai are not performing Toby admits he has a tempestuous relationship with Jay:
"There's a lot of friction between us but it's a productive thing," says Toby.*

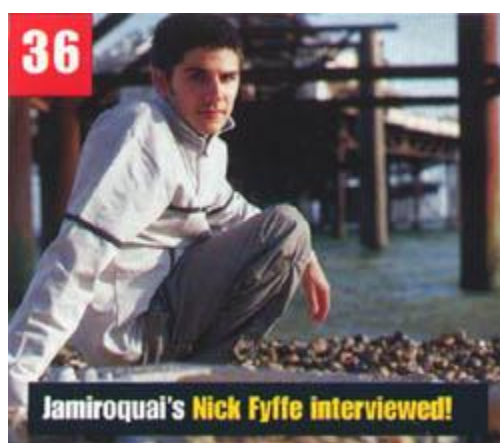
"Jay can be big-mouthed but if I ignore him he just goes away."

SUB-SECTION #5: Nick Fyffe Interviews

**Nick Fyffe Interview #1 | Bassist Magazine
Summer 1999**

"Jamiroquai's Nick Fyffe" By Steve Lawson

The first interview with 26-year-old Nick Fyffe.



*From obscurity to one of Britain's best bass gigs, Steve Lawson charts the fairytale rise of Jamiroquai new boy,
Nick Fyffe*

*FIRST NIGHT NERVES / "I enjoyed the photoshoot for Bassist, 'cos it took my mind off it all, prancing about on
the beach".*

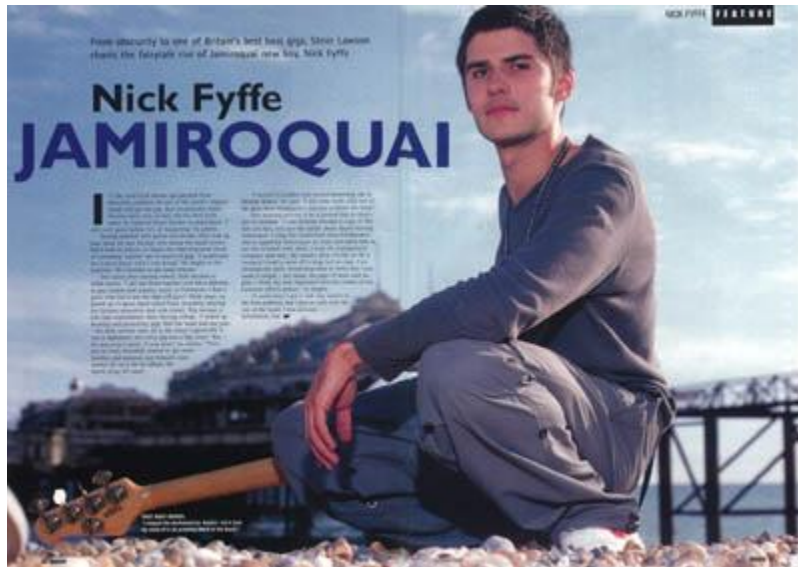
*It's the rock n' roll dream: get plucked from obscurity, audition for one of the world's biggest bands and get the
gig. Just occasionally those dreams come true, as they did for Nick Fyffe when he replaced Stuart Zender in
Jamiroquai. 'I still can't believe it's all happening', he admits.*

*Having dabbled with guitar and drums Nick took up bass when he was 18 and after doing the usual
covers-band stuff at school, he began the time-honoured ritual of answering 'wanted' ads in search of gigs. "I
auditioned, but I never knew what I was doing." He laughs at the memory, "So I decided to get some lessons."*

*Two years after leaving school, Nick decided to study music: "I got my head together and did a diploma in jazz
studies and popular music in Chichester. I had a great time but it put me right off Jazz!" While there, he joined an
11-piece band called Funk Assembly, playing the London University and Club circuit. This became a full time
commitment after leaving college. "I ended up booking and promoting gigs. Half the band had day jobs - the
horn section were all in the army! Logistically it was a nightmare, but every gig was a big event." But the pay*

wasn't great. "I was skint," he admits, "Then, just as Funk Assembly started to get some interest, and someone put forward some money for us to do an album, the whole thing fell apart.

"I moved to London and started answering ads in Melody Maker," he says. "I did some work with one of the guys from Freakpower, and got to know the band."



This meeting proved to be a pivotal link in Nick's rise to stardom. "I was flicking through a copy of The Sun one day, and saw the article about Stuart leaving Jamiroquai. I rang Jim Carmichael from Freakpower, who'd supported Jamiroquai on tour, and asked him to put me in touch with them. I rang the management company and said, 'My name's Nick, I'd like to fill a vacancy'. I had to send off a bio, but no tape. I sat chewing my nails, wondering what to write. But I just made it simple - my name, the gigs I'd done and my gear. I think Jay was impressed with the names of my Lovetone effects pedals," he laughs.

"A week later I got a call. Jay wasn't at the first audition, but I got on well with the rest of the band. I was nervous beforehand, but once there, I felt at ease. I played the tunes, and then asked if we could play some more 'cos I was enjoying myself! So we had a little jam.

"I was called back for the second audition. That's when I got seriously nervous! At first I thought nothing would come of it, but now it was down to the last five players. It was all a bit daunting - Steve Lewinson (Spice Girls), Nick Cohen (Incognito) and Paul Lancaster (The Honeyz) who's a great player were all up for it. I thought, 'I'm never gonna get this.'

"I didn't know what I'd have to do at the second audition," he continues, "so I couldn't prepare. I turned up and met Jay. I started jamming with the band and it just seemed to click. After that they showed me a new tune, the band disappeared and left me alone with Al Stone, their producer. I had to put down a bass track - there wasn't a guide bass part - and Al said that, vibe wise, it was the best of the tracks they'd done. He didn't say that I'd got the gig, but he hinted I was close. The band came back to hear it, and liked what I'd done. Derek said, 'Well, you've got my vote', and I began to think that the gig may be mine. Jay asked me to come back the next day. When I arrived, he came over, gave me a hug and said 'You're the new bassist for Jamiroquai!' and that was that!"



THE LIVE DEBUT

"It took me a few tunes to relax, but then I really got into it – it was great"

After Zender had left, much had been put on hold in the Jamiroquai camp. Now with Nick on board, they refocussed on the album. "But for the first three weeks I didn't do anything. There was some re-working needed to get the songs to a point where I could come in. When I eventually started recording, it was all done really quick. The pre-production had been done and I was going straight in on the album, not demos. I stayed at Jay's for the recording, and didn't have time to think about it. It's all a bit of a blur."

Many people assume that the hardest thing about landing a high profile gig is filling shoes of a better-known player, but Nick, now 26, has avoided the pitfall of comparing himself to Mr Zender. "I didn't hear anything that Stuart had done on the new album," he says of the recording process. "I don't think about 'following Stuart'. If I did, I'd stress myself out."

It's obvious that Nick has his head screwed on, and is looking to establish himself in his own right. "Obviously comparisons will be made, especially by other bass players. But at the end of the day, your average punter isn't that bothered. Jay's the frontman, and a lot of people might not even notice the change. Stuart was a high-profile bassist, so I'll probably get slated by people who wish he was still there. But some might prefer what I do. Ultimately I don't really care."

Of the new album, Synkronized, Nick says, "I recorded about seven tracks, four of which are on the album. There were a couple of tracks that we recorded live, and I was pretty much left to do what I wanted. Jay would sometimes have an idea that he'd hum and then I'd play. There was a lot of freedom, except when Jay had a specific idea - sometimes he'd come up with a bass line and write the track around that."

"The rest of the album is keyboard bass, which is the sound they were going for. I have to replicate that live, which is fun - I get to use lots of pedals and stuff. I'm using a five string, to get those low notes."

So the honeymoon's nearly over and it's down to the stuff of being in a band - touring. The Synkronized tour started on June 9, in Brighton. "It went very well," he told Bassist the following day over coffee in Covent Garden. "We were well rehearsed, we just had to go out and do it. I was very nervous. But I enjoyed the day. I was very nervous. But I enjoyed the day. I did the sound check, then the photoshoot for Bassist, which was great 'cos it took my mind off the whole thing, prancing about on the beach. When I got back to the venue, I managed to eat a little, but then the nerves kicked back in. It took me a few tunes to relax, but then I really got into it - it

was great. When we came off the stage, everyone gave me a hug. Now I'm looking forward to the rest of the tour."

And what a tour. "After the UK," he says, referring to the eight gigs the band played here in June, to estatic audiences. "Next is the states, then South America, Europe, Japan and then back to the USA. Next year we go to Australia and we end up doing all the UK festivals next year, which will probably be the end of the tour." Probably? Sounds like a heavy schedule!



MEET THE BOSS

"Jay came over, gave me a hug and said, 'You're the new bassist for Jamiroquai!'"

As Billy Bragg once sang, 'It's a mighty long way down rock n' roll, from Top of the Pops to drawing the dole', but Nick Fyffe has done it in reverse, and remains philosophical. "I've suddenly found myself here, playing for Jamiroquai, which I couldn't have imagined eight months ago. Everything's so new - I'm very naive and inexperienced. I've never done a tour before. At every other gig I've done, I'd come off stage and go and see my mates. At the first Jamiroquai gig I saw a few friends, went over to say hello and suddenly these people came from nowhere wanting autographs and stuff! I don't know if I'll ever get used to it - it's a bit surreal. The fame side of things just isn't reality. I'm still getting my head round the whole thing."

*Nick's Funk Assembly
the tools of the trade for a Jamiroquai bassist*

Nick recorded on a pre-Ernie Ball Musicman, but uses a newer 5-string on tour. Amp-wise, he is yet another Ashdown convert. "They're nice and simple. I don't like too many buttons and lights. I just want to turn on, plug in and sound good. During the rehearsals I had the EQ out and it sounded so punchy - I've got an 8x10" cab and an 800 watt head."

But it's Nick's effects set up that seems to be at the heard of the Fyffe sound. "I had all these mad ideas for pedal boards and switching systems but I decided to keep it simple. All the pedals are in line, and if I run into trouble I can just bosh the line selector and get a clean sound."

"I've got a Sans Amp before the line selector, then a Digitech Whammy Pedal, a DOD EQ and a Lovetone Meat Ball envelope filler. The meat ball has it's own loop, and I've got a Lovetone Big Cheese pedal... [laughs] and that goes into Big Mac, large fries and a milkshake! The Big Cheese goes into an EBS Octave pedal, both in the loop of the Meat Ball. That goes into a Q-Tron, which goes into an EBS chorus / Flange / Pitch thingie. It's not that

cimplicated really" [Yeah, like, sure!]" I love trying out new sounds, but I'm not really into the train-spotting side of it... Honestly!"

Fitting Tribute

A while before I auditioned for Jamiroquai, I was going through the ads looking for work, and saw one for a Jamiroquai tribute band. The guy said he's call me when they were next doing auditions. I thought no more about it until the day of my second audition for Jamiroquai when I got home to a message saying, 'It's the about the Jamiroquai tribute band - we've got some auditions', I thought this is SO freaky! I told Jay about it when I heard I'd got the job, and he thought it was hysterical. I considered doing the audition just for a laugh, but I thought if I didn't get it, it would be too much!"

MEET THE BOSS

"Jay came over, gave me a hug and said 'You're the new bassist for Jamiroquai'"

THE LIVE DEBUT

"It took me a few tunes to relax, but then I really got into it - it was great"

SUB-SECTION #6: Wallas Buchanan Interviews

Wallace Buchanan Inteview #1 | Radio One Interview

June 8th 1998

"Radio One" By Lisa

"London's Radio One gets to interview members of the band in Dallas for a pre-show broadcast during the Finsbury Park concert."

Wallis - Hi I'm Wallis Buchanan, Didgeridoo player.. for Jamiroquai

Lisa - So when did you, erm.. first hook up with the band

Wallis - Erm.. from the beginning really.. Erm, me and Jay, its like.. we have known each other from Ealing days, long time ago.. we used to skateboard and stuff. I hadn't seen him for couple of years and I was living in Camden.. and I heard that he was.. erm.. playing on this track called er.. "When You Gonna Learn.. and he asked me if I'd play on the intro.. so I said, yeah.. ok.. so I played on the intro and then it worked. It was about the environment and it was a earthy instrument. So then I thought.. ok we put a middle eight section in it.. just to spice it up, and it started from there really.

Lisa - What is it about the Didgeridoo, that... you know.. that turns you on

Wallis - Basically just the sound, you know.. when I first heard.. its like.. boy, I need to hear this sound again, and I did not know anyone who played it or where I could even buy the music from, so, I just thought.. I had to teach myself, so that's how it started and I had a plastic tube, to start of with.. did not have a didg. I learned the certain breathing techniques, took me about three months to get it and then, I had this tube.. and I never stopped..

Lisa - From West London, to Fort Worth.. (Wallis giggles) last time you played at Fort Worth, tell me about that gig

Wallis - Eleven on us on stage, and there were about five people in the audience.. but as the night went on.. we just had a laugh. More people came in and it was packed by the end of it

Lisa - What usually happens when you come of stage

Wallis - Normally, we just have a drink.. have a slaggin match or, like, some people start complaining about, you know.. the sound was not right or sometimes its like.. yeah, excellent gig or really good vibe, like specially in

America now, like.. we have come over and started off in Vancouver and went down to Seattle and San Francisco, San Diego and Denver.. and its like the vibe, now, is.. just seems to be happening here now for us. You know what I mean.. the response, I think we have cracked it or, am I speaking to early..but, do you know what I mean, it feels like that

Lisa - Its all the excitement in the air

Wallis - And every seems to be talkin about Jamiroquai.. like in L.A.. and were doing Finsbury Park as well, and that's like 35,000 people and I think its sold out, already

Lisa - Does that surprise you..

Wallis - You don't feel any different. Ok your wages might go up. Yeah, I don't feel like I'm pop star, you know, I just like I'm Wallis Buchanan. I go to Tesco to do the same thing as everyone else does, you know.. back at home. Its like when your on the road, you sought of see it more, cause your just in it and its like.. the response you get from people and even like when where doing the arena's in England.. and Europe.. like in France, you play to 17,000, like that's when you know.. 17,000 people come to see you

Lisa - Do you feel.. I mean Jay is obviously the center of everything, without JK, there would be no Jamiroquai.. how do you feel about all the attention.. because.. obviously, its on you guys, but its all on him, as well, mainly on him..

Wallis - No, he can have the attention, that cool with me..

Lisa - Suits you fine

Wallis -Yeah, that's cool

Lisa - Do you feel he hogs the attention, though

Wallis - No, his a real showman, but we all have to be sometimes.. you know what I mean, but your not really being a showman.. your just being yourself.. what you are. I think everyone hogs it now or then

Lisa - Alright.. my final question is "Where do you see it all going in five years for now, say. Its always hard to predict the future, but.. general directions??"

Wallis - I just think it will just go on. I don't know where it will branch too.. No one really knows.. but I just know, its just a progression, a natural progression, I mean.. we have done three albums now... say it was a piece of cake.. you've just had a a quarter of Jamiroquai. Theirs plenty of more to come. Its just the beginning

Lisa - Might we have a Mister Buchanan solo venture

Wallis - Ohh yeah, yeah.. don't worry about that. That's in the pipeline.. thats in the didjeridoo (manic laughter)

SUB-SECTION #7:

Stuart Zender Interviews (Former Bass Player)

Stuart Zender Interview #1 | OK Magazine

September 1998

"All Saint's Mother To Be - Melanie With Her Fiance Stuart"

A rare interview with Stuart and Mel about their upcoming baby.

'WHY MY CHILDHOOD ILLNESS MAKES OUR BABY SO PRECIOUS' One year ago, Melanie Blatt was just part of another little-known girl group. Then, almost overnight, the All Saints turned into the hottest new prospect around, as their first single, I Know Where It's At, catapulted into the charts. And when their second hit, Never Ever, bagged them two 1998 Brit Awards, they surpassed the Spice Girls. These days, the All Saints' own 'Mel B' has even more reason to smile. Her deep brown eyes sparkle with happiness as she enters the hotel room where OK!'s photoshoot with Mel and fiance, Stuart Zender - the bassist for top acid jazz group Jamiroquai - is taking

place. As Mel removes her jacket and reveals the taut bump that is the couple's baby, her beautiful, Bambi-like face breaks into a grin.

'OK, baby?' Stuart whispers, gently kissing the top of her head. The couple are obviously very much in love. They touch and tease each other constantly. It's also clear they're delighted with the pregnancy - sitting on the sofa, answering OK!'s questions together, Stuart rests his head on Mel's bare stomach contentedly.

You'd only been together three and a half months when Mel became pregnant. Was it a shock?

Stuart: *We had talked about it quite a lot. We wanted to have children. Mel misplaced her pill, which was in her bag! I think we're at a good age for having kids [Stuart is 23 and Mel's 22]. I want to be active with my child.*

Mel: *Kids have always been important to both of us. It's kind of rare for people of our age, because most people just want to have fun and we were like, 'let's settle down and have a family'. It wasn't shocking to us, although some people thought it was too soon. But I believe that once you've found the person you want to spend the rest of your life with, you should just get on with it.*

How did you find out you were pregnant?

Mel: *I misses my period, so I did a home test. I was in Germany with All Saints, and Stuart was in England, so Nicky [All Saints' Nicole Appleton] was with me to lend support. We regressed back to 11 years old, being secretive and giggly.*

As soon as I knew, I felt completely different. I didn't have to think about it, or whether it was the right time - it just felt right to me.

Did you ring Stuart straight away?

Mel: *Oh, Yes. He couldn't believe it. He was over the moon. He fumbled and muffled down the phone to me for about five minutes. It was lovely. We both cried.*

How did other people react?

Mel: *My family were really excited. They know how happy Stuart and I are together. I'm quite a responsible person, so they knew they didn't have to worry. The band were a bit shocked - more about timing than anything, but I reassured them. The record company have been great, really supportive.*

Do you know whether it's a boy or a girl?

Mel: *We found out she's a girl about two weeks ago. We were both relieved - Stuart more than me; he really wanted a girl. I did too, because I was 13 when my sister Jasmine was born, and I helped bring her up. There are only girls in my family - I wouldn't know what to do with a boy!*

Have you thought of a name?

Mel: *Lilyella. I thought of it at about four o'clock one morning. Lilies were the first flowers Stuart sent me.*

Stuart: *Yes, it's lily as in the flowers, and Ella as in Ella Fitzgerald. The most beautiful flowers and the most beautiful voice.*

You're five months pregnant now, Mel. Are you enjoying the pregnancy?

Mel: *A lot of people have said I look well on it. And I feel great - all the women in my family have always enjoyed being pregnant, so I never expected it to be anything but good. I love having a little human being inside me. And technology today - for me to actually see my baby inside me is amazing.*

The fans have been fantastically supportive. I wasn't sure whether they'd be happy for me, but they send me gifts for the baby, which is lovely. It's been a great experience so far.

Stuart: *There are no words to express it. Lilyella has a personality already. Whenever I come into the room, she starts kicking Mel like crazy. And at the World Cup, she was trying to put the ball into the back of the net for Brazil!*

Mel was ill when she was younger, wasn't she? Will that affect the birth?

Stuart: *Yes, mel will have a Caesarean - she has three metal rods in her spine because she had to have an operation for scoliosis when she was 13. She's booked into the hospital on November 27. And can I just say, it's the same hospital where Mick and Jerry had their baby. They take really good care of the fathers there!*

Mel: *I didn't have to have a Caesarean, but I could imagine myself halfway through the labour saying, 'No hang on, I can't do it this way!' So I thought it was probably safer.*

Are you going to breast-feed Lilyella?

Mel: *Certainly. I was breast-fed until I was 18 months. I refused to leave my mothers breast, and the bond I have with her is very rare - I think it has a lot to do with breast-feeding.*

Everything has happened very quickly for the two of you. Did you know immediately that this was going to be a long-lasting relationship?

Mel: *There was definitely something weird going on the minute we started talking.*

Stuart: *It was so strange, because I was at a point where I didn't expect to meet anybody. I've had so many relationships with model types. I went out with Milla Jovovich for two and half years, and she drove me mad.*

How did you meet?

Stuart: *As I said, I wasn't really looking for anybody. It was at the party for the film Face Off, and I just thought I'd go and have a laugh with the boys. I'd been on tour for two-and-a-half years, so I didn't know anything about All Saints. But when I met Melanie, I couldn't take my eyes off her. Shaznay [Lewis, of All Saints] was talking to me, but I just kept staring at Mel over her shoulder. I couldn't help myself. Later on, I gathered up the courage to ask if I could give her a lift. Being the gentleman I am, I was planning just to drop her off and call her the next day, but she invited me in for a coffee. We both fell asleep on the sofa in front of the TV! We've been together ever since.*

Mel: *The next day, Stuart had to meet my parents because I was living at home. It was OK, though - they loved him.*

And then you got engaged after only three months. Were you surprised when Stuart asked you to marry him?

Mel: *We'd already said we wanted to spend the rest of our lives together. We'd made that commitment, so I wasn't expecting a marriage proposal. It took him a week to ask me - he kept saying he had something to ask*

me, but he wouldn't say what. The way he was faffing around, I thought he was going to tell me something bad. In the end, he asked me in the middle of the night to marry him. He told my dad the next day. it was so sweet.

When did you get the ring?

Mel: *When he asked me to marry him. Stuart chose the ring. It's lovely. It's slightly too big, but I haven't got the heart to take it off to get it fitted properly.*

Have you made any wedding plans?

Stuart: *I'd like to go to a beautiful island somewhere. Just charter a plane and take all our closest friends and family. We're not sure about a date yet, though. I'd quite like Lily to be there holding the ring, so we'll probably wait.*

Mel: *I'd have married Stuart as he asked me, but it's a time thing. I want it to be as perfect as possible and as private as possible. I'd love to go away to an island. Everybody's doing it now - Louise, Ronan - but it is a lovely way to get married.*

Are you living together now?

Stuart: *Yes, Mel moved into my house in Wandsworth about a month ago. It's great. I don't know how she puts up with me - I'm a bit of a nutter. But that's how I knew she was the girl for me. She's so amazingly patient. When my mum met her, she just went: 'That's the one!' My mum's never said that before about any of my girlfriends.*

Mel: *It's really good. Everything's improved. Being engaged and getting pregnant and still living with my mum wouldn't seem right. It's lovely we get on so well. We're good together.*

It must be hard to keep a relationship going when you're both on tour so often...

Mel: *It's hell. Before I met Stuart, I had decided to become a nun! I certainly wasn't looking for a relationship. I'd had three years of nothing. So I decided to concentrate on my career and not get sidetracked. But then I met Stuart and got sidetracked big time. Now it's physically painful when I leave him.*

Stuart: *We've had the worst luck, conflicting schedules and that sort of thing. But we're dealing with it. Our love is very strong, so I don't think that being apart will affect us.*

Every time I see Melanie and look into her eyes, it's been exactly the same. There's no distance between us at all.

How long will you carry on working on stage?

Mel: *As long as possible. I'm going to have to stop travelling at seven months, and I'll move less on stage. But I can still do interviews and stuff. We're just finishing all the promotions and then we'll be in the studio. It's all worked out very well.*

Mel, would you like to put the record straight about recent newspaper reports that claim you're leaving All Saints because you're pregnant?

Mel: *I thought about it for five minutes. I didn't want to ruin anything the band had accomplished. I didn't want it to be my fault if anything was to go wrong. And with the baby, I thought it might be better if I left. But then I just thought, no!*

But is it a possibility?

Mel: *Definitely. Just because of the workload and the way this business is. It's not what I thought it would be, especially now that we're successful. It hasn't improved in any way. It's a fickle, horrible business to be in. If I left All Saints, it would be because of the business, not because of the band.*

What about the rumours that you and fellow All Saint Shaznay Lewis fell out because you were pregnant?

Mel: *I've known Shaznay for about six years now - we started this band together. We've got a lot of respect for each other. She wasn't fully one hundred per cent for my choice of having a child, but again, that's because the six years we've been together, I've been totally devoted to Shaznay.*

Now that something else has come along, it can be worrying for her to think, 'Oh, now Mel's going to leave' and, well, you just never know. Our relationship was strained for a while. But we've sorted out our problems, like sisters do. You get on with it. And that's what we've done. The other thing is, we're all growing up and we've got our own lives. We're not going to stay 17 forever.

Stuart: *It's Mel's life and, at the end of the day, only she can make the decision for herself. Money and fame is one thing, but a child's love is priceless.*

There's no doubt that your life will change once Lilyella arrives. Do you worry about how you'll manage to look after her with your hectic schedules?

***Mel:** I'll make time. It's as simple as that. The band's very important to me, as is music, but nothing is more important than my child. Lilyella will travel with me. My mum's going to travel with us, to make it easier. And, of course Stuart will be there as much as he can.*

***Stuart:** The only problem is that, as soon as Lilyella's born, I'm on tour for two years. But we'll work around it. I'll fly home and fly Mel and Lily out. But the way we live, there's so much love around - my parents, Melanie's parents, even the guys in my band. Lilyella won't have any problems at all.*

Finally, what are your hopes and dreams for your daughter? Stuart: I just hope she's happy.

***Mel:** She'll definitely have a lot of love in her life.*

Stuart Zender Interview #2 | Bassist Magazine

February 1998

"Acid Reign" By Gibson Keddie

"London's acid jazz scene is going seriously international with bands like Jamiroquai. Gibson Keddie caught the Travelling groove."



London's acid jazz scene is going seriously international with bands like Jamiroquai. Gibson Keddie caught the Travelling groove.

"There was a lot of doubt from record company people when we were recording the latest album, Travelling Without Moving, especially from the Americans, who were butting in with their 'opinions' about how the album was sounding to their finely-tuned commercial ears. . ." Jamiroquai bassist Stuart Zender barely keeps the contempt out of his voice; after all, no band in recent years has ploughed such a quirkily individual furrow in terms of direction or sound. When a Jamiroquai record comes on the radio, you know immediately, thanks to a funksome backing over singer Jason Kay's unique white soul muse, exactly who's playing. Most bands would kill for such an instantly identifiable sound, and now, after considerable success, the record company wants to 'modify' their appeal... It's not too difficult, then, to understand Zender's disparaging comments.

"Yeah, they'd say, 'Hey, this just sounds a bit too acid jazz for us,'" he continues, obviously still amazed by the experience, "and they were throwing R Kelly CDs in our faces to 'inspire' a new direction for us! Can you believe that? De Angelo's songs, too, though he's a good friend anyway. You just can't bust into someone's recording session like they did, shouting, 'Oh, no, this is never gonna work in America...' We just kept on, although it was very demoralising. No one there had any faith at all. Six million albums later, they're all, 'Hey man, I knew it would do well.' I always check certain people when they give me that bullshit now, one guy in particular, I said, 'No, you didn't, man. Cast your mind back and remember your opinion was, 'No! Too acid jazz, guys. It's never gonna work.' I'm not bitter, although I did take it on board at the time, and it hurt," recalls Stuart. 'Now it's a good little lesson, 'cause I won't listen to people like that - I won't take it on board again.'

Tough third album?

In many ways it was 'make or break' time for the former North London acid jazzers (how the hell did it get called that? It isn't acid, and certainly ain't jazz. . .). That ever-present 'difficult' third album syndrome awaited Jamiroquai at the start of Travelling, but when frontman Jay Kay released the original 92 recording of 'When You Gonna Learn', he didn't even have a band per se, as Stuart points out, mainly a floating pool of 'help out' players who, maybe, weren't too sympathetic to the new J'quai groove (even though Brand New Heavies' basscat, Andrew Levy, performed low-end duties for that track). Soon after, having added a regular hard-core funk team to the roster and, of course, a didgeridoo, the first album, Emergency On Planet Earth, head-rushed its way towards being a sizeable hit. Zender joined up with the JK team later that year, playing first on 'Too Young To Die'.

So, difficult third album? The young bassist shakes his head; he doesn't agree with this principle. "Nah, they said that about the second one, too. I'm not gonna forget, Jay's not gonna forget, no-one else in the band is gonna forget that first of all we're musicians; we write music to please ourselves and hopefully other people. There was a lot of pressure with the second album too - 'Get it out! Come on, you've gotta do it!' Now we've established ourselves, and everyone knows who we are; we've got a good fan base, so we can take our time in thinking what we're going to do with the fourth album. There'll be remixes and stuff to come, but we're looking at April 98-time to release that new one, and just chill. Work's always in progress; when we're on the road, we're always writing. It's just that we want to have the time to relax and reflect on what's actually happened and with all the bullshit that everyone's seen, to digest it and out it in a positive way. Wah," he shrieks, laughing at his own profundity, "that's some mouthful of phil-o-so-pee!"



Cosmic trip

Stuart actually grew up in Philadelphia, in the States, and cites this as a major factor responsible for his rhythmic abilities and musical influences. Being white, he was in an absolute minority at his high school, and got beat up more often than he cares to remember. "Don't tell me that racism - which I detest - doesn't work the other way" is his painful conclusion from those early years. But he knows why his band is successful, and is suitably realistic in terms of the musical content, though even he would admit to some surprise at the sales totals thus far. "Cosmic Girl", one of the biggest hits so far, is not really the most musical of tunes, but it's a good disco dance-y pop hit, really. At the end of the day, none of it's sampled at all, though, it's us. The textures are all there, being played live by young people of today." Yeah. Dig those funky bass octave patterns in 'Cosmic Girl' - very 70s disco!

"The octaves we used were standard disco stuff in the style of - God bless him - Chic's Bernard Edwards. He wasn't the tightest of players but it was just his sound and his moves, I loved it, I was very inspired by stuff like, 'My Forbidden Lover'. Bernard actually died just before that track was recorded," he remembers, "maybe it was some subtle tribute to Bernard - keeping the disco thing alive!" Do you get the chance to try out different grooves for Jay's songs? "Yeah, basically we're in the studio together and Toby will be faffing about on the keyboard doing some chords, then I'll do a b-line to it and then Jay will start doing some other melodies and that's how the songs evolve. The grooves between me and Derrick (McKenzie, drummer) just come quite naturally; we're not doing those tried and tested grooves that everyone else is doing - those Mary J Blige type samples - we're trying to be a bit different without trying to be different - we don't wanna be contrived. But we must re-charge our inspiration batteries, otherwise we'll end up writing about hotel room service, coz that's all we've seen for two years. Or hotel 'Pay TV' - haha, oops..."



Sampling

Speaking of samples... "I hate people thinking that we use samples in Jamiroquai, but I have to say that I personally do listen to a lot of hip-hop music. I think some of the weirder samples are good: stuff like A Tribe Called Quest; you can hear that it's special. I enjoy doing that stuff, too, I muck about a lot at home with those techniques. So I'd say it's OK to sample, but just do it well, OK? Jay, on the other hand, is probably not liking of samples." What about the possibility of Jamiroquai using loop patterns live, a system that would perhaps leave Stuart to be more free to experiment a bit? He sees distinct possibilities in this, though, surprisingly, perhaps not related to his bass playing. "Y'know what, with this new album, because we'll probably be doing stadium tours by then, we might actually bring in some looping things into some songs. Not too much, because when you start bringing clicks into every track, it gets too 'corporate', yeah? No room to groove. But I reckon I'm gonna be putting my bass down this next time, and picking up a drum - a big Brazilian drum called a soordoo - on this next tour, and I'm going to go for it! On our live gigs at the moment, there's a latin breakdown section, and I'm doing those very slapped rhythmic patterns on the bass, anyway. Now I want to try it out on actual percussion."

Touring

"I like to go out and do one big tour for six months and then finish - but it never works like that because the demand increases - here, there, there. Then the managers try to coin it in on the side, over there. In the end, you do more work and stress yourself out, jeopardising the relationships you have with other band members 'cause you're in each others' pockets 24 hours a day. My nerves have been a bit frayed on this tour, we've got this last three date stint in the States, and that's fine. Everyone's taking a break and chilling out. We were supposed to do a longer tour in America - they wanted another month and a half - but after a year's touring it's, like, 'No way! I don't think so! Ideally, you wanna go and give it everything and stop; not give it everything, then 'oh, can you give a bit more? A bit more? Just a bit more and you'll be home...' Agony."

Big break

As you may have realised from Stuart's comments regarding the, er, controversial American input at the start of this feature, the band are putting their backs into major success in the US - there lies superstardom. "America is the last 'territory' for us to break, really," comments Stuart, "and it's being broken at the moment. After we played on the the MTV music awards, the office phone didn't stop ringing; we had to get in extra staff to deal with the interest in us. We're doing lots of TV shows out there and it's good, because this album in the States

alone sold two million - that's cool. The first album sold 200," he jokes, "Nah, maybe 10,000 copies, if that. But we had underground appeal with that first album, and all our fans there didn't have no money anyway!" he cackles...

American TV

"American TV shows are funny. We take a totally English crew out there, and they just cane everybody. I've seen so many fights between American crews and our English crew. The English crew are very arrogant, but it's just like being in the army - job to do; do it! Americans think we're a very intimidating band, 'cause there's just so many of us when we go we take our own little vibe with us. We get to these US shows and there's all this artificial bullshit going on - fake everything. It is fun doing them, sometimes, though. Jay Leno (talk show host) was good, he was cool. David Letterman's studio is freezing - it's an ice box. He doesn't want to sweat on camera, so he gets all the air-conditioning turned up maximum cold. Believe me, it's really hard to play when it's -10° centigrade, David!"

Next Jamiroquai album

"This will be the album that'll be like BOOM! And after it's all through, we'll get three years off, I'll get married, have kids, get divorced, lose all the money, end up on drugs... Just kidding," he winks... Scallywag.



Funky Warwicks!

"There's two basses basically. There's the multi-colored one which I took from the pattern of a native American blanket worn by Chief Joseph from the Iroquois. I took a section of that and put it on the bass. It looks good. Then I met Martin Sims and he offered to take my other bass away (ha...!) and fit it with red LEDs beneath the Ying and Yang dot markers that Warwick put in. I asked him how he did it, but he just said, 'You don't wanna know...'"

"Practically speaking - it's good. I don't really look at the fretboard that often, but there's certain sections where the stage is blacked out, so it's cool them. From an audience point of view, it's part of the show, and it's nice to think, 'Ooh, that's different. Oh, wow, the geezer's for lights on his bass!'" Stuart laughs at this statement, which triggers his own memory of the effect. "I first saw it with Mark King's Alembic bass, and was like, 'Oh God, that's amazing. It's neat!'"

And, speaking of Mark King, Stuart leans over to the tape recorder's mic...

"I'm still waiting to meet you, Mark, mate! I've heard he's keen to meet me too. Yeah, I'd love to go and meet him in the Isle of Wight, and sit and listen to him. When I grew up, songs by Level 42, like 'Lessons In Love,' were in the US charts. They were the only 'real' tunes that stuck in my brain because they were a bit more funky - even though they were pop tunes, they were more funky than anything else.

"I love Stanley Clarke's playing too; I'm really inspired by him and Alphonso Johnson. Wehn Alphonso plays, he's not just playing, he's 'talking' on the bass all the time, and I like that. He's playing his emotions, you can hear it in the way he plays."

And thereby hangs a tale, which Stuart recounts. Eager to get his chops up on a bass as quickly as possible, a novice Stuart Zender bought a budget bass and copped all the parts on Weather Report's album, Black Market, having assumed that the bass parts were all played by errant genius Jaco Pastorius.

*"I didn't know that Black Market was done by Jaco **and** Alphonso," Zender admits, "but it makes sense. Their styles were kind of similar as well. Alphonso's a very learned player - and I'm not!" he stutters. "But if you wanna give me some lessons, Alphonso, I'm here!"*



Stuart Zender - Gadget Man

"Yeah, I really am; and it really annoys my girlfriend! All girls hate gadget men, don't they? I just love fun toys and gadgets with hydraulics, servo motors, trinkets, LEDs. Electric things, whatever, I just love computer things! Wicked!"

Stuart Zender Interview #3 | Radio One

June 8th 1997

"Pre-Show Inteview: Stuart Zender" By Lisa Of Radio One

Broadcast interview with Stuart Zender before Finsbury Park; was recorded before their performance in Dallas.

Lisa - Just say what your name is, and what you do in the band

Stuart - Hi, I'm Stuart, I'm the bass player..and I have just ordered.. SHRIMP POPCORN!!!

Lisa - Exactly, cause its a couple of hours before we are going on stage when ere.. where are we.. well you best describe it.

Stuart - Well.. it's.. kind of a cagesion nightmare.. looking place, but we can get food for 12 bucks here, and that is what we have been given

Lisa - So, everyday.. how's it work. You have been given your sort of "pocket money" to go off and spend

Stuart - Well.. yeah, yeah. I mean in, in Europe we had a cook, the whole way through, and that was really nice, but here.. we get buy out's, sometimes

Lisa - So, life on the road is extremely glamorous then

Stuart - NO, well.. sorry

Lisa - Most of you guys, yesterday, didn't even know what city you where in. Does it really get that delirious.

Stuart - Yeah, I guess so. It does. You just get timezones and Denver, Seattle, Washington... where am I.. please help me.

Lisa - So theirs like about 35 people on the whole entourage.. I mean, is that kind of nice.. to have that family vibe

Stuart - It is.. It is.. It has been and I mean, on our bus, it does get a bit crowded sometimes. Everyone is working on there own litle thing, loads of leads everywhere.. people running back and forth. I had a bit of a nutty one on the bus.. the other night doing back flips.. and sort of things like that.. but, its a like a little family. We got our own humour and..

Lisa - Okay, lets talk about the man, without whom this would not have happened. Lets talk about Jay.. what annoys you about him

Stuart - (Stuart laughs)... Jay's a great guy.... that's all I gotta say.. (Stuart laughs). I love him very much. We have been through alot of stuff together, you know.. all of us and, you know.. we got a good relationship, you know, all of us. I would run to them, you know.. basically, I have no friends.. its just the band.

Lisa - Okay so Finsbury Park is happening.. obviously.. your travelling all over the world.. Europe, your now in America, Japan.. and all of that.. but is there no place like home

Stuart - Theirs no place like home, definitely.. I love being home. I love the people there. The vibe in England.. you know.. if it wasn't for England.. none of this would have happened to me at all

Lisa - What do you miss about the UK, when you are away..

Stuart - My house.. some space, quiet.. you know.. not being on the road, basically.

Lisa - Do you find it easy to switch off, though

Stuart - Ohh yeah, definitely.. I'm very good at doing that. (chuckles). I'm very good at switching off

Lisa - So, Finsbury Park.. what's it going to be like

Stuart - Hopefully, its going to be really good. We got a really massive P.A. there.. you know.. hopefully we will be able to crank it up..cause last time, we had a decibel problem.

Lisa - Last time, the sound was loud

Stuart - There was a little old lady, across the street

Lisa - Exactly

Stuart - We said "Come on"... We invited her down.. we said.. you know.. come back.. we'll have a little food and drink and whatever. Get you out of your flat and still.. no.. So hopefully

Lisa - Last time was a bit quiet, wasn't it.

Stuart - Theirs lot of people supporting.. isn't it. There's lots and lots of different bands and I have not actually seen, the sheet, so I can't actually say.. hey, I'm really lookin forward to these people playing

Lisa - (Lisa reads out the list, while stuart is still talking) Farside....

Stuart - WHAT

Lisa - Morcheeba..

Stuart - YOUR JOKIN

Lisa - Erykah Badu

Lisa - Yeah man.. there all with you lot..

Stuart - Booooooy.. I tell you, these are my favourite bands.. as well

Stuart Zender Interview #4 | Bass Player

May 1997

"Can Jamiroquai Take Over The World?"

By S.L. Duff

SZ talks about his childhood, his discovery of music, and his musical innovations



Jamiroquai may not be a household name in the U.S.-- but if the rest of the world is any indication, Stuart Zender's group will probably be topping the charts Stateside before long. His fellow bass players have certainly begun to spread the word about the 22-year-old Englishman, and for good reason. Zender's highly stylized, confident, and very up-front playing is in many ways the musical centerpiece of the group's smooth, soulful sound.

Across the Pond, Jamiroquai is one of the most prominent bands going. In fact, its meteoric rise was probably as close as a band can get to being an "overnight sensation." Initially, the "group" consisted only of outspoken vocalist Jason Kay and some hand-picked session players. Scoring a deal with the U.K. indie label Acid Jazz, Kay-- working as Jamiroquai-- recorded the single "When You Gonna Learn?" in 1992. The song broke wide-open throughout the U.K. and sparked a major-label bidding war, which was won by Sony.

"I turned up after that first single," says the amiable and enthusiastic Zender. "Basically, Jay was using various musicians from Acid Jazz, including Andrew Levy on bass, who is the Brand New Heavies' bass player and a good friend of ours. Jay had a good voice and everything, but he didn't have a solid band; it was just these Acid Jazz types, being sort of unhelpful with him. Then he was introduced to Toby Smith, the keyboard player, and drummer Nick Van Gelder, who knew me-- and from there, we got on like a house on fire. It was just a perfect combination, because we were all into the same music and the same vibe."

*At the time of our conversation, Zender was getting ready for a break from Jamiroquai's hectic schedule, during which he, Kay, and Smith would head out on a catamaran for some R&R; during the Christmas holidays. After that, it was back to work, with a tour of Japan followed by some U.S. dates-- the latter to coincide with the domestic release of Jamiroquai's third album, *Travelling Without Moving*, released in the U.S. in January. *Travelling* was already a hit in Japan, Europe, and the U.K., but its release was strategically delayed in North America until a time when the group could come here and play. "That's been a problem," Zender figures. "We can't be every place at the same time, so the releases have to be stifled a bit. You can get the album as an import, of course, but we want everyone to get the full hit of it all."*

*To date, U.S. music fans have been slow to discover Jamiroquai, which currently also features guitarist Simon Katz, drummer Derrick McKenzie, and Wallis on didjeridoo. The band's previous discs, *Emergency on Planet Earth* and *Return of the Space Cowboy*, have garnered a fervent cult fan base for the group, but they have yet to create the sort of U.S. numbers they do overseas. Zender thinks it's a matter of categorization.*

"I think it's because of the type of music we're doing. It's not new jack swing; it's kind of R&B; but it's not. It's more a sort of jazz fusion-- which is quite hard to pigeonhole in the States, because it's not that glossy R&B; sound and it's not that dirty grunge sound. A guy at our record company said a lot of new alternative dance radio stations are starting up in the U.S.; that could be in our favor, because then we'll get the airplay, and we won't have to fit a stereotype. We can just be Jamiroquai."

The seemingly radio-friendly music shouldn't have difficulty finding a larger American audience. Jamiroquai blends funky grooves, soulful feels, dance rhythms, and superb musicianship while rejecting the current R&B; status-quo of sampling and looping the rhythm tracks. It's all the real deal-- and Zender's playing is often as prominent as Kay's Stevie Wonder-like vocals. "Yeah, a lot of people say that," Zender admits, referring to the center-stage position his bass takes in the mixes. "It definitely drives all the songs. There aren't many bands where the bass is kind of up front, are there?"

Even groups that put a lot of emphasis on the bass in recording often place it in the back seat for live performances-- but Stuart says this isn't the case with Jamiroquai. "I've got lots of tricks and effects for playing live. I've got a Boss ME-8B multi-effects, Mu-Trons, a DigiTech Bass Whammy pedal-- you can drop down two octaves! It's great if you do that through a 50,000-watt PA. It sends people to the toilet!"

Listening to Zender's playing, it's hard to believe he's only 22-- and it becomes more difficult still when you consider he's entirely self-taught and doesn't read music. Beyond that, how did a young English guy get such an affinity for American soul music, much of which is older than he is? "I grew up in Philadelphia, you know, so I've been around black music pretty much my whole life."

Born in Sheffield, England, Zender moved to the States at age seven, when his stepfather was transferred to the Philly area. Settling in Norristown, about 15 miles outside of Philadelphia, Zender attended elementary school and junior high there before moving back to England at age 15. "If I hadn't have moved back, I don't know what I'd be doing with my life today. England has given me the chance to broaden my horizons musically. At my school in the States, everyone was either into Depeche Mode or Bruce Springsteen; there wasn't a lot of alternative stuff going around then, and I was dying for it. It's hard to look for interesting new music if you're in that environment."

Zender comes from a musical family. His father is a musician, his uncle is a flamenco guitarist, and his older sister played in punk-rock bands while Stuart was in the school marching band. In fact, he met original Jamiroquai drummer Nick Van Gelder through his sister during her punk days. Zender started making his own noise while attending junior high school. "My first instrument was the snare drum. I tell you, lots of bass players started that way; Larry Graham was playing snare in his school marching band, and he moved from the drums to the bass guitar. That's pretty much how I started out: I loved the drums, and I was really into playing them."

Back in England, at about age 16, Stuart was still obsessed with rhythm-- but he found he wanted to change instruments. "I really loved the sound of the bass; it was really fulfilling for me," he fondly recalls. "So are beats and rhythms, but the bass just filled up something inside of me. I'm really drawn to that sound, where so much air is being pushed out."

Now, get this: To learn the instrument, Zender decided to copy, note-for-note, all of Alphonso Johnson's and Jaco Pastorius' bass parts on Weather Report's Black Market. "I was introduced to that album by a friend, and I just went crazy. The track that really got me is the one that starts out with a train [the Jaco-penned "Barbary Coast"]. It's really, really funky. I went out and bought a cheap bass, and I basically learned the entire album."

Talk about baptism by fire! It might seem this music would be tough for a beginner player to master-- but Stuart shrugs it off. "I think it might have been easier because my ears had been trained so much from listening to my uncle; I had gotten used to hearing him practice classical stuff for hours, so it didn't really strike me as being that unusual. But when I first picked up the bass, I thought, Wow-- if I ever could play this whole album, that would be just amazing. Slowly but surely, I did learn it; it became familiar to me, like anything does with time." How long did it take? "Well, about two weeks. I'm a quick learner, though. If you've got the drive, and you really want to do something, you can do it. I really wanted to show my friends I could play that album, and I did it."



From there, Zender moved on to "anything I could get my ears onto! Stanley Clarke's first album [Stanley Clarke], was the second one I learned. I listened to lots of funky stuff, like James Brown records, which have simpler bass lines. From there, I delved deeper into the Weather Report file." Other bassists who have inspired Stuart include Motown's James Jamerson and original Tackhead bassman Doug Wimbish. "Doug inspired me quite a lot, because he's just a nutter, basically; he's really mad. I watched him play, and I just thought, God-- there really are no limits to this thing. I was told that if you meet Doug, you either give up playing or get inspired; luckily he inspired me. I like weird players, as well. Mick Karn is a really weird player, and like me, he plays completely by ear. He can't read a note of music, but he's still quite talented. I just like quirky bass players-- one's that don't play the standard licks. Me'Shell [NdegeOcello] is on my tip as well-- she's great."

Following his intense 1989 woodshedding period, Zender busted out playing in his only band prior to joining Jamiroquai. "It was a little punk group that played around the pubs and stuff, but we didn't really do well. I got fed up with it. I wasn't being musically satisfied; I'd been learning Weather Report tunes, and there I was stuck onstage, playing these little four-chord songs. I would always jazz the whole thing up and start doing solos and things like that, and they would just tell me to shut up. It was an experience to play in front of people, regardless of whether or not they were throwing bottles at my head."

Meanwhile, Stuart's fascination with funk led him to London clubs, where soul and funk recordings would keep the crowd motivated all night long. "In London there's a big rare-groove following," he explains, "a big sort of funk scene." The cornerstones of rare groove, Zender explains, are predominantly made by vibist Roy Ayers and trumpeter Donald Byrd in the mid '70s. When asked about a London funk revival, Zender explains it's been going on for some time. "I don't know about the clubs in the States, but loads of people here go to clubs. There's a lot of house, garage, techno, and jungle-- but still, there is a big, big, big following for funk and rare groove. Most of the R&B; you hear now on the radio is all just loops of '70s music-- you now, with a rap over the top, and maybe a couple of vocal lines nicked from George Clinton or the Mary Jane Girls, or whatever. It's all revamped. That's what I call revamping music."

Though Jamiroquai plays and sings everything themselves-- with no "nicking" involved-- the band borrows heavily from the past glories of funk and soul. "Yeah, we use the Rhodes keyboard, live drums, live bass, funky guitar, and things like that-- but at the end of the day, we're living in the '90s. We're almost at the year 2000; there's no possible way you could ever try to sound retro. I think the instruments we use are retro, but music is like a big circle. It always comes back to itself."

When told most Americans seem to think the music in merry ol' England centers around the so-called Brit-pop movement, Zender chuckles. "Well, good luck to them all, you know what I mean?" Referring specifically to Blur, Oasis, and Kula Shaker, he opines, "That kind of music doesn't really satisfy me personally-- but let 'em go for it. They've obviously cornered a market, and the kids seem to like it; they're buying the records. But for me, I prefer the Beatles!"

Jamiroquai's quick success and high profile have also brought the perks pro musicians can expect: band members being able to play just about any instruments they want. In Zender's case, that means a Warwick 5-string the company custom-painted for him. "I had an American Indian Iroquois blanket, and Warwick painted the pattern of the blanket onto the bass for me. I've also got a Warwick Streamer Stage I and a Warwick 8-string, which is a 4 with an octave string next to each standard string. I use it on a tune called "Revolution," from the first album. It sounds like a guitar is following me." Stuart's amp is a six-tube Trace Elliot V Type. ("The valves sound just great.") He uses two 4x10 cabinets, also made by Trace Elliot. "I use Trace strings as well. They make excellent strings."

Zender likes to mix up his sound with effects; he loves his Boss ME-8B, a digital multi-effects unit with choruses, reverbs, fuzztone, envelope filter, and 18 different synth-bass presets. "That pretty much takes care of everything. I've got a chorus as well, which I use to pop out some of the slaps a bit." The ME-8B has stereo outputs, which can send effects separately to the right or left channels or blend between them. You can hear this in full flight on "High Times," from Travelling Without Moving. "If you were to strip down the track, you'd see the real bass is in the middle, the fuzz is on one side, and the synth is directly opposite," explains Stuart. With the stereo amp setup, certain settings can provide wild panning effects as well. Zender is also considering adding a programmable EQ to his rig. "I'd like to have four or five different preset EQs-- which is quite important really, because sometimes when you start slapping, you tend to lose a bit of the punch. Obviously, the PA guy has got my bass rigged for a certain sound, and he can't adjust every time-- so I need to compensate."

Electronics help to shape the tone of Zender's bass lines, but technique is even more important to his sound. He is primarily, but not exclusively, a fingerstyle player. "I love that slap sound, too; I like actually hitting the open D or G strings when I'm on the E. I also like dampening, where you put your palm on the end of the strings and play with your thumb. It provides a kind of double-bassy sound-- like a bass with dead strings. Zender's palming method can be heard on "Drifting Along" and "Didgital Vibrations," both from Travelling. "That's basically what the Studio One people used to do," he mentions. "All those dub-reggae guys wouldn't change their strings; they'd

have the same set on their bass for years, and if a string broke, they'd fix it rather than replace it. That sound is big, round, and sometimes slightly out, because the strings are so old you can't really tell if the tuning's right."

Stuart also occasionally uses a pick, sometimes coupled with his palming technique. "I use a pick live on 'Travelling Without Moving,' although I don't think I used one on the album. It gets an edge on it, you know? And if you dampen it as well, the notes get more staccato. It sounds really good."

It seems with so much success for the young Zender, the sky is really the limit-- although, no doubt, conquering America is still to be checked off the list. But Stuart is not without his goals, which include learning to read and write music. "I would love to learn how to get it all written down," he says, "because sometimes when you want to communicate an idea to someone, it's a lot easier than singing. You can hand it over and say, 'Look-- here's my song.'"

In the mean time, surely guest appearances and side projects must be in the works, right? "I did some rap stuff for Gang Starr, but I haven't really been around to actually accept any offers or anything. I would like to work with some other people, but I think I need to wait until Jamiroquai has some time off!" Outside of straight session work, Zender admits to having a side project on the back burner. "It's in a vein of A Tribe Called Quest. It's a hip-hop kind of thing-- using those sorts of beats-- but it's more melodic, instead of just one groove that goes on and on. I'm going to get various rappers and singers to do stuff on it, but it will be mostly live music, with some sampled material as well."

Having learned by sheer determination-- combined with obvious natural talent-- Zender has graduated early to the big time. His natural knack for playing by ear, as well as his talent for combining techniques to make his own funky sound, have led him to one major conclusion: "There are no rules. If you can get a sound by using a pick-- or even a pickle jar-- go for it."

Stuart Zender Interview #5 | Bassist Magazine February 1996

"The Scat's Pyjamas" By Roger Newell

A look at SZ's American roots, his bass-playing techniques, and his musical influences

"Ages ago on a TV music show someone asked me, 'What colour is soul?' something like that. I replied 'Soul has no colour,' then some girl joined in with, 'What do you mean? Of course it does.' But it doesn't. We're born with natural ability to express feelings whether musically, artistically, any way at all...it shouldn't be colour exclusive."

If you've ever copped an environmentally friendly Jamiroquai groove floating out of radio speakers somewhere on a sunny summer day, you'll already appreciate the feelgood factor which emanates from the psyche of the London soulsters. Harking back to that blissful period in the early 70s when bass, in the grooves of Philly funk/soul, was the true and undisputed king, the J-team's cool suss is anchored via the precocious four string talents of Stuart Zender. Presently working on his place in the bass scheme of things, young Zender is not entirely happy with the 'if you're this then you can't do that' school of parochial thinking, as witnessed by his 'colour of soul' response. "One of the neatest things ever said to me was from a black bass player," Stuart continues. "The guy said 'You play really ba-a-d bass, man!'"

Sounds reasonable. Why should any type of music be 'colour-coordinated'? Nonsense, surely.

"There's a lot of that attitude particularly in the States, though," counters Stuart. "They're so category conscious, with all the marketing stuff that goes on. But I liked that guy's comment because I felt then that I'd crossed that barrier. I wasn't playing black music, I was playing white music, but he could understand what I was doing. In America, they have this problem that they do relate colour to a style of music, which is wrong. I don't think

music has got colour at all; I think it's got rhythm, and you move to that rhythm, and that's it. When I was in Brazil I enjoyed the Brazilian rhythms, and not because I was South American."

If anyone does, Stuart should know about the Philadelphia vibe...

"I was brought up in Philadelphia with exposure to lots of soul and black oriented music there. Believe it, in the school I went to there were 2000 people and only 245 of them were white."

These sound like facts and figures quoted by someone who's only too aware of the situation...

"Yeah, I used to get beaten up - you talk about racism here, well, I was on the other end of the stick. But that's my background, and Jamiroquai was the first big music project I ever did. I was in punk bands before, but I always had that soul side, just waiting for that thing, to make it grow and pop out. And it did - I met Jay (Jason (Jay K) Kay, Jamiroquai frontcat) through Nick Van Gelder, who was our last drummer, a friend of my sister's. They used to be in a band together. Big sister - I used to look up to her because she was in a band! Later on, when I was about 17, I started getting back in contact with Nick. He knew that I could play reasonably well but didn't know to what standard...they were used to a certain standard but I'd been playing with older musicians."

Nick already had the gig with Jamiroquai at that point?

"Yes, Jay really liked his playing because he was quite a solid drummer compared to what he was used to; I guess he was used to drum machines before Nick. But our ideas moved on and Nick's didn't. He's very talented but we couldn't really communicate with him. It got to the stage when there was nothing there. It was a breath of fresh air when Derrick (McKenzie) came in. With Derrick's attitude in the band we've all got a better working relationship with each other, it's all growing. It's not necessarily Nick's fault that it didn't get like that, it's just timing. Three bloody years of not holding on to a speeding bullet," laughs Stuart.

Essentially joining an already-formed band, was he behind all the wacked-out bass grooves on 'Emergency on Planet Earth,' the first album?

"No, Andrew Levy, I do believe, plays on When You Gonna Learn?, the first tune done on the Acid Jazz label, and I wasn't in the band then. The first tune I did was Too Young to Die, around 1992-3."

Following on

For someone as naturally suited to the bass vibe as young Zender, Stuart is decidedly uncertain as to when the bass effect actually struck him... "I don't really know. There's this mad bass player in a band called Ozric Tentacles which, funnily enough, Nick was also in. He's like a white version of Jimi Hendrix, he looks just like him. He's really mad, but he's one of those likable people who inspired me a lot. He's really good at all instruments - piano, bass, all that, but he lacks lithium in his brain, a chemical imbalance, and he was, like, very intensely speedy all the time, but naturally so! Then I moved on to Weather Report, because Ozric's music is Weather Report-ish. There's an old album of theirs with a tune called Oghabe on it, and it was really like Weather Report, and I liked it. And then from fusion to funk. I like drums as well - I started on snare drum, believe it or not, in a high school marching band in Philadelphia. It was good because we had funky cadences!"

Is Jamiroquai an integrated thing, or more Jay's backing band?

"We're very much integrated. That sounds like a safety mechanism to me, really. On the last album, 'The Return of the Space Cowboy' we each had our say. It's moving on from there, the next album will be a totally different

thing, we all have specific things to do. The first album had to be Jay, because he's the one that signed the deal with Sony, we didn't, we have a deal with him. It's all very lucrative at the end of the day, but I've got the freedom to work with other artists as well."

Album differences

"I left a lot of space in the second album for other things to come through and allowed them breathing space."

A sign, perhaps, of playing maturity?

"Could be - the further you get on the less you play."

Given that, what's Stuart's opinion on re-listening to the first album now?

"I listen back to it and think, 'Bloody hell, is that me?' I can't believe it. When we first did it we all hated it. Every time we'd hear it would just be, like, cringe, cringe. And then I hadn't heard it for ages and ages and I put it on and I was proud to be on it."

A case of being too close to the songs and the recording initially?

"Obviously yes. You're hearing it, getting battered by it left, right and centre and end up with a kind of mental block to it, then it comes back fresh and you can hear it with almost layman's ears."

Fingers

"Yes, I'm a fingers man, slapping very hard, like that."

Hmm, sounds like it too, on the first album in particular: low action, a lot of fret contact - real bass sounds!

"As for basses, Warwick has been very helpful and given me two really lovely fretless basses, beautiful, one with lights on the fretboard, the works. Otherwise I've been using my fretted Warwick and my '74 Fender Jazz quite a lot. That's great, Oh, and the Alembic."

What was actually used on the first album?

"That was all the Warwick. The second album was the Alembic, the Fender and the Warwick fretted."

Fretless on a couple of tracks, too?

"Yes, Manifest Destiny was originally done on a fretless with a flanger and it sounded great, but we re-did it."

Is the bass intro on that track totally your own?

"Actually, Jay wrote that. Well, he hummed that melody to me, but it wasn't like that. I put the other little part on it, that's mine. He gave me the basic line and I improvised the end of it to lead it back round to that thing. If it was done right, I wanted it to sound like Logan's Run. You know the beginning of that, with that keyboard...what is it, a Juno? (pauses) I think our next album is going to be tough, man."

When does the world get to hear the next Jamiroquai album?

"I can't tell you that. It's top secret. Lots of things about that album are top secret."

Are you working on it at the moment?

"We're going to book out a studio and we've bought some equipment that we're going to be putting in the bottom of Jay's flat to get grooves and ideas so we can take them all and whack them altogether. There'll be lots of Spanish guitar on it. There's a tune that's a love song that's light, airy, Spanish. A little bit more Brazilian than your harder, dirtier funk. Tunes specifically catering for the dance floor."

Secrets will out, eh?

Self-assessment

"I did this Archaos circus thing, which was a show called 'Metal Clown.' They're a French circus troupe, no animals, very over-the-top, and they do lots of stunts like juggling chain saws, all kinds of fire, it's like a freak show, you know, but blown up, enlarged. Basically they had a troupe of 80 Brazilian artists with drums, the whole troupe. I left school at 16 and went to do that, my sister as well. I learned a lot off them, their rhythms, the way they were throwing them out. I'd always be playing during spare time with one of the guys, and he'd say, 'It's wrong' about the rhythms, but I learned later on it's just 'slop'; not even slop, it doesn't have to be on, if you know what I mean. Not on all the time, just a natural rhythm. I certainly used that idea in Jamiroquai's music."

Progress

"My playing style's getting weirder, that's for sure. It's getting very quirky."

In what way?

"Just weird. It's not standard, it's probably to do with me being stoned playing, it gets weirder like that; but I've done about three or four tunes by myself and they are b-a-d, really tough tunes. They're not like 'flash bastard' bass playing, they're nice..."

Why is everything about the new album so secretive?

"It's just better to hold it down. Things will leak out, obviously. We could put out an E.P.; we've got tons of songs on tape. Toby and Derek [sic] have done a thing with M-Beat, a jungle tune. There have been little things popping out. It could happen, but I don't know."

Are there likely to be any more personnel changes? Are you still the same five-piece as on the last album?

"We've got myself, Toby, Derek [sic], Wallis, Jay. We've got five people there who are going to write music together. We've got a percussionist who joined us on this last leg of the tour, and he might be doing quite a lot of work with us, as well. There'll be people in and out, basically, but bass, drum, keyboards and vocals will stay the same."

Other bass players

"I don't know, man. I'm clueless about bass players out there. There are tons of really good players. Someone saw the Becker Brothers recently and said their bass player was rocking. I'd like to go and see these people, but

Jamiroquai is my main output at the moment. I've put all my energy into that. I do have other projects on the side, but I'll let them grow with me, as I've grown with this band."

Any possibility in the future of a Stuart Zender solo album?

"Could be. I'd like to play music with other people - Brandy, that black R&B singer, she's only 15 years old but has such a beautiful voice. I'd like to get into the studio with her."

Other drummers

"Dennis Chambers. I saw him at the Nice Jazz Festival. Amazing drummer. I found some up-and-coming drummers, too; a guy I met in Greece who's from Yugoslavia, and goes to music school in Vienna. 25 and he plays just like Dennis Chambers, just amazing. There are so many young talents out there. Give them the chance and they'll really shine through."

The infamous Jamiroquai didgeridoo

You're in a fairly unique situation, whereby you've got a didgeridoo which is used extensively within the band's sound. When he's playing, obviously because it's a fairly monotone thing, are there notes on the bass that you have to steer clear of?

"Yes, because of the frequencies. The didgeridoo is tuned to different keys without it clashing."

Do you ever try to get a particular rhythm together on that particular note? It could actually enhance some of the sounds you can get together, a direct human element in the bass sound - you're both bass instruments, but it's more vocal.

"Yeah, but it's a story-book as well in the Aboriginal culture, so you can't abuse the instrument by bebop-ing down it."

But there is an element of experimentation, surely, that could be explored? You are in a unique position to try that.

"Yes but it happens anyway, because he does the basic sound of the didge - I play the didgeridoo as well, and there's a call that you do; you've got the basic tone and you've got the calls, the dogs and the bats and the wombats and all that. He does rhythms in between myself, the percussionist and Derrick. When we do the live gigs, we have a jam that leads into a song, and Wallis plays for about half-an-hour. I don't know how he can do that. Aboriginals have come up and said, 'How can you do that for half-an-hour?'"

Very physical, isn't it?

"It is extremely physical, really. He's getting head rushes after head rushes. And he basically does all the rhythms up top, but keeping the same frequency. So it's happened already. The jam at the end could actually be used for a tune I think, as well, with the didge."

As for Jamiroquai's inspired success, well, any band which features didgeridoo as lead instrument on intro of the first track of the first album...would you?

**Stuart Zender Interview #6 | Bass Player
May/June 1995
"World Fusion With Britain's Jamiroquai"
By Douglas J. Noble**

SZ talks about learning to play the bass and lists his favorite musicians

"I hate to stick music into little boxes," sighs Jamiroquai's bassist Stuart Zender, "but if I were to forced to describe our music, I'd say it was jazz/funk/fusion/Latin. When you hear someone like Stevie Wonder, though, you don't put him in a box-you just think 'songs'. That's how I want people to hear our music."

Though he's only 20 years old, the precocious Zender has already racked up some serious touring miles. Leaving school at age 16 after being told by the headmaster he would "end up in jail," Stuart drifted into a job as lightman for the apocalyptic punk-circus outfit Archaos. "That taught me about working as part of a production team," the bassist explains. He then met Jamiroquai singer Jason Kaye through Archaos's ex-drummer. "I went for an audition, and they liked my stuff. That was in the beginning of '93."

Stuart's solid, confident playing with Jamiroquai belies the relatively short time he's been playing bass. "I started about four years ago," he grins. "I've got a long way to go yet-I'm still learning new things every day. It's not that I feel restricted on the bass at the moment, 'cause I'm there to keep it simple and to keep the groove going-but I know there's a lot more I could do. I just haven't had time to explore the possibilities. Our new drummer, Derrick McKenzie, is very into his rudiments; he practices every day, and he likes to help other people get their point across. He's helped me tremendously."

It also helps that Zender was tuned into bass long before he began playing. "When I was little," he remembers, "I would always pick up the bass lines in tunes. I was really into the bass and drums on James Brown records, before I even knew what a funk record was! Later, I really dug the theme song to Starsky & Hutch. All my friends thought I was a complete weirdo, 'cause bands like Wham! were popular back then."

Stuart lists Jaco, Stanley Clarke, Mark King, and Mingus as influences, and he cite Weather Report's Black Market as a prime inspiration. But he doesn't limit his listening to bass players. "I like classical music; I'm really into Ravel and Chopin. Also, I listen to a lot of Latin and jazz-Miles Davis, the Brecker Brothers-and the old '70's stuff like Donald Byrd, Roy Ayers, Johnny Hammond and Earth, Wind & Fire. I really like Joni Mitchell and Carole King now, but when I was younger I was into punk-the Dead Kennedys and the Sex Pistols."

Jamiroquai's four person nucleus consists of vocalist Kaye, Zender, keyboardist Toby Smith, and drummer Derrick McKenzie, with Wallis Buchanan chiming in on digeridoo. Each player had his work cut out for him on the band's latest offering, The Return of the Space Cowboy. "The new album was more fragmented recording-wise than the first one." Zender comments. "We used about five different studios, trying to get the right sounds, and all the lyrics were written after the music. It took us about seven months, with lots of editing and rearranging. It's easy to get stuck in that second-album syndrome, where you feel the pressure to prove you can keep going-but you have to ignore the pressure and just get back to writing music in its pure form, without worrying about people's expectations."

Although the bass playing on The Return of the Space Cowboy is more dynamic than on the bands debut, Emergency on Planet Earth, Stuart has a confession to make. "I'm really slack," he laughs. "I don't practice; I'm not someone who can meticulously work on something every day. I'll do it only if I feel inspired or if I need to play. I have actually improved since we made the last album, but that's just a natural progression after playing with so many good musicians. You learn just from being around people."

Stuart's main bass is a Warwick Streamer Stage I, which he bought when he joined Jamiroquai. "I've also got a lovely custom Warwick 8-string; it sounds beautiful, like a guitar following the bass line. I didn't use it on the album, but I do use it live. Doug Wimbish showed me his Warwick 12-string, but my hands are so small I couldn't really get a grip on the neck-so I called Warwick, and they made me an 8-string with a regular size neck." He also has two fretless Warwick Stage II basses, one with lights on the fingerboard so he can see the fret positions when the stage lights are down. His amp rig is all Warwick: a 350-watt Wamp 400 head, a 410-80 4x10 cabinet. "I've also got a Boss ME-6B multi-effects unit, which I use live on 'The Kids' from Space Cowboy, he explains. "I tried using a plectrum when I first started playing, but I never really liked it-plus, all my favorite players didn't use one. So, I use my fingers." His basses are strung with light-gauge Elite roundwounds (.035-.090).

While Zender's own work with the band keeps him busy, he's not about to give up his other pursuits. "My loyalty is to Jamiroquai," he says, "but I've got a publishing contract with EMI, so I write for that when I have spare time. I also play guitar and drums and sing. I want to put together an all-girl band and do my own Johnny Hammond-influenced tunes-nice chords and grooves."

So where did the name "Jamiroquai" come from? It's a combination of an American Indian word for music and "Iroquois," the name of a North American tribe with whom Jason Kaye feels a spiritual unity. It may be difficult to pronounce, but it looks as though we'll hear more from this band-so you'd better get used to it!

SECTION #4: OTHER ARTICLE BLURBS

Sub-Section #1: Music Business Articles

The Good and Bad comments about Jamiroquai over the years to their performances and albums released.

Music Biz Article #1 | VH1 Online October 28th 1997 "VH1 Fashion Awards"

A mostly photographic wrap-up report of Jamiroquai's performance at the VH1 Fashion Awards



The jazzy English band admitted the show was "a little bit nerve racking," but they were glad that everything turned out to be "Alright."



"The pit people" in front of the stage all donned cat-in-the-hats in a tribute to lead singer Jay Kay.



Jamiroquai's stage show was enhanced by a giant-sized version of Jay Kay's signature chapeau, but overall they looked, in their own words, "pretty scruffy."

**Music Biz Article #2 | Rolling Stone Magazine
October 16th 1997**

"Random Notes" By Matt Hendrickson

A report on the events onstage and off at the MTV Awards, including a brief mention of JK



Before the damn show even started, there were fireworks at the 1997 MTV Video Music Awards. Foo Fighters-- who played two songs outside New York's Radio City Music Hall during the pre-ceremony festivities-- announced that guitarist Pat Smear was leaving the band, to be replaced by Franz Stahl. "That was freaky!" said drummer Taylor Hawkins. Head Foo Dave Grohl was a little more reflective. "I had never been at the front of the stage with Franz," said Grohl, who used to play drums with Stahl in the punk band Scream. "Usually I'd just stare at his butt." How to top that? Fireworks...literally. Sean "Puffy" Combs and Co. lighted up the stage during a performance of the Police-sampled "I'll Be Missing You," complete with a surprise appearance by Sting. "Fifteen years ago, I could have never imagined that this song would be used this way," said Sting. "He gives me such positive energy." gushed Combs, who won Best R&B; Video for the song. After that, the show settled into a groove while the action shifted backstage. There, Beck (who nabbed the most awards, five, including Best Male Video for "Devil's Haircut") got bum-rushed by those freaks the Spice Girls. "We love you," they squealed in unison, tousling his hair. "Hi," said the startled Beck. "Bye." Fiona Apple was full of her usual piss and vinegar after winning the Best New Artist trophy for "Sleep to Dream." "I felt like laughing hysterically out there," she said. "It's so ridiculous." Other highlights came after the show at Madonna's downtown soiree, held at the New York boite Lemon. Revelers included Courtney Love (hugging Madonna, no less) and beau Ed Norton, Billy Corgan, Gavin Rossdale (cuddling with his amour and award winner Gwen Stefani), Leonardo DiCaprio, Claire Danes, Sheryl Crow, Jewel, Madonna ex Dennis Rodman and, er, Donald Trump. "You know that guy Mr. Blackwell?" asked Love, referring to the compiler of the annual celebrity worst- and best-dressed lists. "He used to be a designer. This is his dress. So he can never pick on me again." (Well, that makes one less enemy.) The party took a scary turn when actor Paul Sorvino confronted Corgan because of comments the singer made about Sorvino's other daughter, Amanda. "You don't know who you're fucking with!" roared the proud papa. Cooler heads intervened, and the two ended up shaking hands. Whew. "I'm just laying low," said Corgan. Jay Kay of Jamiroquai (whose "Virtual Insanity" won for Best Video of the Year) was holding court upstairs. "I smoked 10

spliffs," the singer said. "I was chatting to all sorts of women and being a bit of a naughty pop star."

Music Biz Article #3 | Music Week

September 15th 1997

"MTV Award Winners Soar On US Charts"

Jamiroquai's acquisition of four MTV Awards brings them notoriety and greater album sales



*Jamiroquai are already reaping the benefits of winning four awards at the MTV Video Music Awards after their album *Travelling Without Moving* jumped 46 places to a new high of 29 this week on the Billboard 200 chart. Epic/S2 director of international marketing Jon Fowler says he is confident it can now double its current US sales of more than 750,000 units. Jay Kay is pictured, centre, with Sony Music Worldwide president Thomas D Mottola (left) and Sony Music UK chairman/CEO Paul Burger.*

Music Biz Article #4 | Music Week

September 8th 1997

"Jay Kay Hits It Big At MTV Video Awards"

Thoughts on the representation of British artists, including of course Jamiroquai, at the MTV Video Music Awards



Jay Kay Hits It Big at MTV Video Awards

*Jamiroquai's popularity in the US looks certain to skyrocket following their four-award haul for the *Virtual Insanity* video - including the prestigious best video of the year - at the MTV Video Music Awards in New York on Thursday (4 Sept), writes David Knight.*

Jamiroquai, who also picked up three other awards, were the main winners on the night with Beck. The US act picked up five awards in a rare example of an act with a relatively low profile in

the States taking the honours over better known American bands at MTV's most important awards show.

Jon Fowler, director of UK international marketing for S2, says Jamiroquai's success - they also won the best special effects, best cinematography and best breakthrough video awards - will translate into massive sales.

The Travelling Without Moving LP, released a year ago this Tuesday (9), has already sold about 750,000 copies in the US and 5.2m worldwide. But Fowler says the MTV effect could double US sales and have a knock-on effect worldwide. "This alerts a much broader audience to what is going on. I can't underestimate the power of it," he says.

As part of the marketing onslaught, Fowler reveals the band will later this month embark on five weeks of touring in the US, including a concert at Madison Square Garden.

At the show, Jay Kay praised the video's director Jonathan Glazer calling Virtual Insanity a brilliantly innovative clip. "I'm glad people are coming around to seeing it our way rather than us ramming it down people's throats from the start," he says.

MTV Video Awards Success Raises British Acts US Profile

The health of British music was reflected in one of the strongest ever showings by UK acts at last week's 14th American MTV awards.

In addition to Jamiroquai's four-award success, UK artists were represented in the honours roll-call by Spice Girls and Prodigy. All three acts performed at the show, which will reach an estimated 300m homes over the next week.

Prodigy's popularity in the US was highlighted by their victory in the American viewers' choice category in addition to carrying off the MTV Europe viewers' choice award for Breathe. Spice Girls won best dance video for Wannabe and then dedicated their live performance of Say You'll Be There to the memory of Princess Diana. Virgin chairman Paul Conroy says the UK showing is a reflection of the current wealth of British musical talent. "It's long overdue and pleasing to see," he says. "With the Spice Girls and Oasis things are much healthier. We always hope the acts making waves will have a long-term future."

Jon Fowler, director of UK international marketing for Jamiroquai's label Sony S2, says the success is good news for the music industry and will do a lot to increase the Sony act's profile. "This puts Jamiroquai up there with the Pumpkins. They've got that status now."

Sony Music UK video commissioner Mike O'Keefe says the strength of the UK music scene has also powered a renaissance in video production. "It's quite unusual for the UK to be nominated in so many categories and then win. It's normally a bit like the Oscars where we win every now and again," he says. He adds that the wider coverage of UK music in the US means UK directors are increasingly being commissioned to work with US acts. Inevitably the death of Princess Diana overshadowed the proceedings - Elton John announced a \$100,000 MTV donation for a memorial fund for her and Notorious B.I.G. The late rapper posthumously took the best rap video award for Hypnotize and Puff Daddy & The Family's I'll Be Missing You, which the band performed with Sting

guesting on vocals, was named best R&B; video. Sean 'Puffy' Combs later said the song was "all about Princess Di as well as Biggie. It's for all those we've lost."

**Music Biz Article #5 | E! Online
September 5th 1997
"MTV Does Beck, Jamiroquai Good"**

Complete details on Jamiroquai's win at the MTV Video Music Awards

Though Beck and Jamiroquai were the big winners at the 1997 MTV Video Music Awards on Thursday night, it was Princess Di who was on everyone's mind.

Beck won five VMAs including best male video and best director (where the first-time helmer beat Hollywood heavyweight Joel Schumacher, co-director of the Smashing Pumpkins' "The End Is the Beginning Is the End") while British trip-hop fusion group Jamiroquai took home four statuettes including the coveted video of the year. Jewel won for top female video, No Doubt was best group and Fiona Apple best new artist. Electonica torch-bearers Prodigy captured the viewer's choice prize.

Meanwhile, multiple nominees like the Pumpkins, Nine Inch Nails and the Wallflowers were shut out.

Highlights included the not so secret appearance of Bruce Springsteen jamming with Jakob Dylan's Wallflowers for "One Headlight" and Sting hoarsely crooning with Puff Daddy and the Family on "I'll Be Missing You"--the "Every Breath You Take"--sampled tribute to slain rapper Notorious B.I.G. (whose real name was Christopher Wallace--he also went by Biggie Smalls).

Much of the talk both on- and backstage focused on the tragic deaths Biggie and, especially, Princess Di.

Madonna called upon the public to damper their zeal for information on the private lives of public people. "It's time for us to take responsibility for our insatiable need to run after gossip, scandal, lies and rumors. Until we change our negative behavior, tragedies like this one will continue." The paparazzi backstage--on their best behavior as the MTV press corps, as well as general public, took a no-nonsense attitude towards them--even applauded the sentiment.

Elton John, a friend of Princess Di's accepted a check for \$100,000 from MTV on behalf of AIDS charities in her behalf and said he would record his new version of "Candle in the Wind" after he performs it at her funeral.

Speaking on his way into the Radio City Music Hall for the show, John said, "She was a very special person. She had the ability to cut through any class system and make people feel at home--the princess next door."

Britain's Spice Girls, winners of best dance video, wore black armbands. As Sporty Spice noted backstage: "It is a great loss to our country. Princess Di had girl power!"

Will Smith, honored for best video from a film for "Men in Black," said backstage that "people need to realize what is private or more tragedies are likely to occur."

Notorious B.I.G.'s tributes were emotional events for the people involved. A teary-eyed Faith Evans echoed the sentiments of Puff Daddy and others who said Wallace's violent death should serve as a wake-up call.

Rockers looking to shock last night included No Doubt's Adrian Young, who appeared onstage in a diaper ("I'm peeing right now") and, of course, Marilyn Manson, who clad himself in a black leather corset and garters. Another memorable moment: Donald Trump quipping on an in-house ad that "Hanson blows." In other news, the Foo Fighters guitarist Pat Smears announced he was leaving the band.

Here are all the winners at the 1997 MTV Video Music Awards:

- *Best Video of the Year: Jamiroquai, "Virtual Insanity"*
- *Best Male Video: Beck, "Devil's Haircut"*
- *Best Female Video: Jewel, "You Were Meant For Me"*
- *Best Group Video: No Doubt, "Don't Speak"*
- *Best Rap Video: The Notorious B.I.G., "Hypnotize"*
- *Best Dance Video: Spice Girls, "Wannabe"*
- *Best Rock Video: Aerosmith, "Falling In Love (Is Hard On The Knees)"*
- *Best Alternative Video: Sublime, "What I Got"*
- *Best New Artist In A Video: Fiona Apple, "Sleep To Dream"*
- *Best Video From A Film: Will Smith, "Men In Black"*
- *Best R&B Video: Puff Daddy featuring Faith Evans & 112, "I'll Be Missing You"*
- *Best Direction: Beck, "The New Pollution"*
- *Best Choreography: Beck, "The New Pollution"*
- *Best Special Effects: Jamiroquai, "Virtual Insanity"*
- *Best Art Direction: Beck, "The New Pollution"*
- *Best Editing: Beck, "Devil's Haircut"*
- *Best Cinematography: Jamiroquai, "Virtual Insanity"*
- *Viewer's Choice: Prodigy, "Breathe"*
- *Breakthrough Video: Jamiroquai, "Virtual Insanity"*

**Music Biz Article #6 | Chicago Tribune
September 3rd 1997**

"It's Time To Get Hip" By Steve Johnson

A feature on the MTV Video Music Awards with special attention to Jamiroquai

If you know what a Jamiroquai is, you are several hipness points ahead of me in attempting to make sense of this year's edition of the "MTV Video Music Awards."

Neither an Australian meat spread nor item of South American neckwear, Jamiroquai, I can decipher from the press materials, is a British acid-jazz band, the one that stands to be the big winner in Thursday's ceremonies, broadcast live from New York's Radio City Music Hall at 7 p.m.

The band garnered 10 -- the most -- nominations, in such diverse categories as Best Video of the Year, Best New Artist in a Video, Best Direction in a Video, Best Art Direction in a Video, Best Special Effects in a Video and Best Choreography in a Video.

The key word, if you're following at home, is "video." Their apparently perfect assemblage of moving imagery accompanies a song called "Virtual Insanity." I would learn and then hum the tune for you, except that the limitations of the print medium prohibit any form of expression beyond ink on paper.

I do not mean to sound the curmudgeon here. I am, it is true, no longer of the age where I know most, or even a handful, of the songs whose video representations are up for the little man-on-the-moon statue. I do not much watch MTV anymore, partly because the channel has removed playing music from its priority list, mostly because when they do play music, being able to keep up with what the kids are listening to is not worth having to fend off the avalanche of commercials. I have also come to believe that video accompaniment, while momentarily interesting, is not remotely necessary to the enjoyment of a good song.

I am not one of those people who denies his own youth by insisting that all the stuff coming out today is too a) loud; b) simple-minded; or c) unmusical. To do so would be to give credence to those who said the same crotchety things about my generation's youthful musical passions.

I am also not one of those people who has squeezed music out of his life as the years and familial responsibilities pile up. If, however, I ever came across the kind of music I have come to identify as moving and meaningful on MTV, I think smelling salts would be in order.

My point in talking about Jamiroquai is to suggest that one should not watch the MTV awards show for the awards. Although chosen by what MTV says is a panel of music-business insiders, observers and fans, they tend to be a stunningly undiverse group. (And illogical: How could Jamiroquai's video be up for all those honors but not have gotten a nod in the Best Group Video category?)

If you stick with the three-hour broadcast, you will come to think that four -- at the outside, five -- videos are up for awards. Joining Jamiroquai this year in the you'll-be-sick-of-them category are efforts from Aerosmith, Beck and Nine Inch Nails.

But as silly as are the awards, the show itself tends to be an entertaining -- often unintentionally so -- stew of fashion and attitude victimhood and a relatively painless way for those of us who have ceased subscribing to Rolling Stone to maintain the illusion of being plugged in.

People do not become music stars because of their good taste in clothes (Stephen Tyler) or their clear-headed thinking, and the result is some often shockingly bad garb or dopey attempts to make a political statement.

Oddball presenter-pairings are par for the course: Milton Berle and RuPaul were a memorable matchup from earlier in the decade. The attention-grabbing stunt is also big on the list, as happened a couple of years ago when David Letterman and Madonna made up onstage, or when then-newlyweds Michael Jackson and Lisa Marie Presley offered what was said to be their first public smooch.

The celebrated Jamiroquai will be performing, as will Sean Puffy Combs and The Wallflowers. Marilyn Manson, Jewel, Prodigy, Lil' Kim, U2 and Beck are also on the list of those scheduled to make rhythmic noises.

The shocker is that MTV is actually granting performance space to its generation's Celine Dion equivalent, the Spice Girls. The big question of interest there is whether the Girls will actually be singing or merely lip-synching.

Chris Rock, whose promising late-night HBO show of earlier this year will be back Sept. 12 with 13 new episodes, is host. And Rock, if you only know him from when he was underused on "Saturday Night Live," is a very funny, very acerbic man. I am counting on him to deflate some of the blimp-sized pretension sure to be floating around.

The "Video Music Awards" may be the only thing you'll see on quick-cut-happy MTV that demands patience. But as a pop-culture touchstone, the awards are hard to pass by, Jamiroquai or no Jamiroquai.

Music Biz Article #7 | Billboard

July 15th 1995

"Global Music News: U.K." By David Sinclair

Jamiroquai finds a home on the Internet at J's Joint

Jamiroquai has become the latest in the growing number of artists and record companies to open a site on the Internet. Sony Music is said to have spent a five-figure sum on "J's Joint," a "virtual house" belonging to group leader Jason Kay. The Joint has built-in interactivity that allows visitors to explore any of the rooms, retouch paintings, play records, watch videos, read the group's press scrapbook, or catch up on activities by such organizations as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth (FOE), the Rainbow Tribe, and anti-road development protesters. Located outside the site's garden is the Jungle Moo (multi-user object-orientated) facility, where visitors can engage in real-time conversation. Jamiroquai rounded off its U.K. tour with a FOE benefit at the Grand in London last month. The group, which has just released the single "Stillness In Time," headlines the Jazz lzz concert, July 29 at London's Highbury Fields park, which features a bill that includes D-Influence, the James Taylor Quartet, and Raw Stylus.

SUB-SECTION #2:

Gossip Articles

Everyone loves to get into a star's personal life, Jamiroquai's members have seen their lives in print ever since '93.

Gossip Article #1 | Heat Magazine

September 16th 1999

"Jaydreaming"

The inspiration behind the Supersonic video.



The inspiration for Jamiroquai's current video, Supersonic, came from a particularly vivid dream Jay had years ago. He saw an image of himself as a warrior in a headdress, hence the singer's fiberoptically enhanced head gear. The rest of the band jerk around the screen seemingly at random. In fact each musician's movements mirror the rate of the sound waves made by their respective instruments. Cool huh!

Gossip Article #2 | Daily Star

June 29th 1999

"What Wedding?"

JK answers Wedding questions during 'BCD' shooting in Glasgow.

JAMIROQUAI star Jay Kay has shocked showbiz watchers by denying that he and Denise Van Outen are on the verge of marrying.

Denise has been busy telling all the world in recent weeks that the couple, who've been dating for 16 months, would tie the knot next year.

But that's not the way Jay sees it.

"We're not getting married, mate," was all the singer would say as he arrived in Glasgow to begin shooting the video for Jamiroquai's next American single Black Capricorn Day.

The news is sure to be an unpleasant surprise for ex-Big Breakfast presenter Denise. Earlier this month the blonde beauty revealed: "We want to get married and it will happen next summer.

"Jay will be so busy on tour for the next year that then will be the only time we can do it."

And she was so confident the couple would tie the knot she had already started planning for it - even though Jay Kay hadn't yet proposed.

She added: "I keep telling everyone that we're getting married in a bid to manoeuvre him into a corner.

"Whatever he says, don't you worry - he's going to end up marrying me. I'll make sure of that."

But Denise also said she didn't plan to move into Jay Kay's Buckinghamshire mansion after they wed - to make sure their marriage survives.

She said: "It's important that I keep my flat in London so I can escape from Jay when he starts talking too much."

But if Jay is to be believed, we now wonder if she's talked herself out of a love match.

Gossip Article #3 | Q Online

June 1st 1999

"Court Beckons Jay Kay"

SZ vs JK: court battle gears up

Jamiroquai funkster Jay Kay will have to do some fancy footwork to fend off a looming threat to his playboy lifestyle. The curiously be-hatted singer is about to be sued by former bassist Stuart Zender, who left the band last year.

*Kay reportedly re-recorded songs on the band's new album *Synkronized* to avoid any later legal hassle's with Zender when it came to sorting out royalties. The feud between the two was relaxed last week though, when Zender and Kay shared an Ivor Novello award for Outstanding Song Collection with the rest of the band.*

Gossip Article #4 | The Sun

May 22nd 1999

"Jay Kay In Blast At Pal"

Details on JK's mocking of Stuart in song.

JAMIROQUAI's Jay Kay has launched a scathing attack at the band's former bass player Stuart Zender - in a song.

*In a track called *King For A Day* on the band's forthcoming album *Synkronized*, Jay mocks Stuart.*

I have a sneak preview tape of the song and in the chorus, Jay Kay sings:

'They say you're only king for a day.

'I guess you're happy that way.'

Stuart quit the band last year to spend more time with All Saint Melanie Blatt and their daughter Lilyella.

A pal of Jay's told me: 'He is really upset with Stuart. This is Jay's way of getting back at him, but he doesn't want a public slanging match.'

Gossip Article #5 | BBC Online: Radio 1

March 23rd 1999

"Jay Kay Gets Waxed"

More on JK in Wax; News of Toby's Parrot Escaping

The Rock Circus in London's Piccadilly Circus unveiled a new Jay Kay waxwork on Thursday. They're trying to get more young and funky - and have actually melted down a load of old timers to make more models of 90s stars like Jamiroquai and All Saints.

There's also a cemetery there - for all the dead stars like Kurt Cobain. Jay's wax double's kitted out in a pair of Adidas Gazelles and a big furry hat. "I think it looks great. I just wanna give them my hat, 'coz it's not the right hat!", Jay Kay told Radio One. And he says reaction to the new Jamiroquai album so far has been favourable: "It's really good. I've got to finish one track and then it goes to mastering. Everybody's into it".

Meanwhile, Toby the keyboard player has lost his pet - Funky the parrot. There's a £500 reward on offer if you find him: "He's not happy about it at all - he's been in tears all day. It flew out the window", says Jay Kay.

**Gossip Article #6 | The Sun
October 3rd 1998**

"Stuart QUILTS Jamiroquai For His Baby - He Wants Time With Preggers Mel"

Stuart's announcement of departure from Jamiroquai



JAMIROQUAI star Stuart Zender has quit the band to spend more time with pregnant fiancée Melanie Blatt.

The bass player told leader Jay Kay he was leaving to help the All Saints singer prepare for the birth.

Mel has called a halt to promotional work with All Saints. She will get back with the band after the baby, a girl, is born next month.

But Stuart has left Jamiroquai for good. An insider told us: "Stuart was finding it difficult being in the studio so much with Jamiroquai and trying to see Mel at the same time."

"The band are recording their new album and it demands a lot of commitment from the musicians"

JUGGLING

"Stuart felt he couldn't maintain that level of commitment as well as juggling it with his home life.

He realised it would only lead to arguments with the other musicians if he needed more time off. He desperately wants to be around as much as possible for Mel and the baby. He has put his family first.

He has no future plans but is bound to find work with another group when the time is right.

Mel and Stuart have already named the baby Lily - after the first flowers he bought her. Mel expects to give birth by Caesarean section on november 27.

Last night a Jamiroquai spokesman confirmed Stuart had to quit, adding "The band wish him well."

**Gossip Article #7 | Acid Jazz
September 28th 1998
"Akimbo 'Call To Freedom'"**

Details on Nick Van Geldar's (former drummer) new band

Throw The Brand New Heavies, Jamiroquai, and Primal Scream into a scene from the forthcoming Studio 54 flick and the result would be Akimbo. Formed by Brand New Heavy, Simon Bartholomew, ex Jamiroquai drummer Nick Van Gelder, Nick Seymour and various members of Primal Scream as an antidote to the pressures of pop stardom. Add to that the vocals of Marcina Arnold and cameo appearances from Jazz keyboard maestro Jessica Lauren, members of Soul II Soul and The Herbalizer provide the icing on the musical cake.

This is their debut single for Acid Jazz and the first track "Call To Freedom" (New Testament remix) takes the sound of Akimbo and mashes it up into a Speed Garage anthem, destined for big things on the dance floor.

Side AA kicks off with the cracking original featuring the uplifting vocals of Marcina Arnold, a great jazz influenced pop tune that will feature on the band's album for Acid Jazz.

Rounding things off is "On Top (Cosmic Jam)" featuring the legendary Ed Jones with Akimbo getting back to their Jazz Funk roots on this fantastic instrumental workout.

All in all a release showing the talents of Akimbo and the versatility of Acid Jazz, still going strong after 10 years.

**Gossip Article #8 | The Sun
September 19th 1998
"Jay Gets In Row With Shaznay"**

More info on the row in London's West End

Jamiroquai star Jay Kay and All Saints singer Shaznay had to be pulled apart after a furious bust-up at the Elle style awards.

Party guests were stunned as the pair - who fell out a month ago - launched into each other as Jay left the star-studded bash with girlfriend Denise Van Outen.

Shocked onlookers heard them trade four-letter insults in the lobby of the plus Swiss Centre in London's West End, before friends dragged them apart.

One witness told Bizarre. "As Hat and Shaznay passed each other in the foyer something was said between them.

"Suddenly, without warning the fur started to fly. They were both hurling foul insults and letting rip with a string of swear words.

"Shaznay was swearing like a trooper. I couldn't believe my ears. And Jay certainly wasn't holding back either.

"It was a very public place to have a blazing row and they had to be pulled apart before they started whacking each other."

Their feud erupted last month when Jay, 28, interrupted 22-year-old Shaznay during a TV interview. They have been at war ever since then.

Jay's girlfriend Denise is a close friend to All Saint band members Melanie Blatt and Nichole and Natalie Appleton who were also at the bash. Natalie was with her fella, Live and Kicking host James Theakston.

Jay was later overheard giving EastEnders star Ross Kemp - banned for five weeks for driving 112mph - some advice.

He told Ross, 34. "You've got to know the roads, man. Know where the cameras are." Jay, currently serving his third ban for speeding, clearly hasn't followed his own advice.

Gossip Article #9 | News Of The World

August 23rd 1998

"I Know What Denise Sees In Her Man"

Confessions of a concert fan

No wonder Big breakfast TV stunner Denise Van Outen starts the day with a smile - for we can reveal her pop star lover is a four-times-a-night superstud! Hunky Jamiroquai singer Jay Kay's former conquest Hal Jenkins told us how he seduced her with champagne, music and erotic baths and admitted: "I wasn't surprised when I saw Denise had been going out with Jay for eight months. I know what she sees in him. He's irresistible." "But she'll have to keep an eye on him. He's a magnet for the ladies." Starstruck Hal was just 17 when rocker Jay - recently no 1 with Deeper Underground - picked her out of a concert crowd at Leeds then lured her back to his hotel for

a steamy sex session. "I was quite near the front of the audience and couldn't help but notice how Jay kept looking at me," said hotel management student Hal. "I was really flattered because a big star seemed to be taking an interest in me. "After the gig I managed to get backstage and Jay asked me back to his hotel for a party. "I travelled to the Hilton on the bands coach and a security guard showed me straight up to Jay's room. I was excited but nervous at the same time. I suppose I knew what it could be leading to but I was a bit overawed. "I was just amazed that I was actually with Jay Kay. I waited outside the room for about 10 minutes then Jay appeared with a bottle of champagne. "I asked him where the party was and he said 'This is it!' and lead me into his suite. This was a party for two." Jay, who's now 28, showed Hal into a huge lounge and told her to relax while he went off to shower. "When Jay came back he ordered some food", she re-called. "I couldn't believe my eyes when it arrived - it was a massive bowl of prawn cocktail. "For a good hour we just sat there and talked. He asked me about myself, who I was and what I did. "I was bewildered about why he'd taken an interest in me because I just had on my baggy old jumper while all the other girls backstage had been in sexy little halter-neck dresses, trying their hardest to please him." BUT Jay said he picked Hal out in the audience because he just liked the look of her. "That made me feel special," she told us. "Slowly I started feeling more re-laxed and confident - it must have been the champagne. "I began phoning room service and ordering people around, being totally pompous. First I called for more champagne. And when the drinks arrived I told the women to put them on the table, really arrogantly. "After she left Jay leaned over and kissed me then lead me into the bedroom. He sat on the bed and I stood over him as he peeled my clothes off and wriggled out of his. He was very skinny but I still thought he looked gorgeous. I was still really nervous but he kept kissing me and reassuring me that he wasn't just using me. "I believed him and went along with it. He didn't have any difficulty in finding a condom - it was obviously a very well prepared scenario - and we made love. "That first time was really special. He was very tender and loving and I felt really good about it. "I kept having to pinch myself to make sure I wasn't dreaming. Afterwards we switched the TV on and watched Four Weddings And A Funeral but then I felt a bit ill. "I was hyperventilating. It must have been because of all the drink. I wasn't used to it. "Jay ran a bath to try and relax me. I started to feel better as I sprawled out in the bath - then Jay got in too. "We lay in each other's arms for a while then he lifted me out and we made love again on a huge mat on the white-tiled floor. "Jay was very passionate, kissing me lots and stroking my head. "Afterwards we went back into the bedroom and as we snuggled down again he told me he really liked my company. I felt so happy. I was on a real high. Next morning I realised I had no money on me so Jay gave me £20 for a taxi. As I left he just said 'Look after yourself'. I was a bit disappointed as I thought I'd really meant something to him. "I'd never had a one night before and I felt I'd been taken in." Lovesick Hal consoled herself staying home and listening to her Jamiroquai records. But two years later she summoned up courage to speak to Jay again - after another concert at the Leeds Town and Country club. Hal had watched the show with her new boyfriend and spotted the band getting on their tour bus. I tried to get near but a security guard stopped me", added Hal. "Then Jay turned round and told him to let me on because he knew me. I looked over at my boyfriend, looked at Jay, the decided to go for it. I felt bad about leaving my bloke standing there but I couldn't help myself." When they got off at the Holiday Inn Hal's heart pounded as Jay gently put his arm round her shoulders and let her to the lifts. "I knew what was going to happen - but I wanted it, too", she confessed. "Jay showed me into his softly-lit suite and put on one of his albums. As we relaxed he smoked some cannabis and suggested we got changed. So we both put on bathrobes and sat on the bed chatting. "Then all of a sudden he leaned over to kiss me. I felt really excited as our lips touched. Then I let my tongue go to work and he went wild with delight. He couldn't stop smiling and kept saying how he loved kinky women. "But I cheekily told him that I wanted MY kicks too, and he made wonderful love to me, taking care to make sure I enjoyed it. He was very gentle and caring. "Afterwards Jay ran a bath and we climbed in together. He sat in front of me between my legs and I massaged his shoulders. He told me he really liked my bum. "Then he led me back to the bed and we had sex again. As the night wore on I started to feel really good and we made love at least four times. "We really seemed to gel. Once again I allowed myself to think it might mean something to him. "He told me he wanted to see me again and asked for my phone number - but the call never came," Hal - now 21 added "I think Jay used me yet again and I've tried to put him out of my mind, but I

have to admit I still like him very much. That Denise is a lucky girl."

Gossip Article #10 | OK Magazine

August 1998

"Jay Kay's Day In Court"

More details on JK in court



Jay Kay, the lead singer of pop band Jamiroquai who is dating The Big Breakfast star Denise Van Outen, has told a court how he was forced to speed in his Ferrari because he feared an arson attack on his £1.6 million mansion in Buckinghamshire. Kay had been told that a female stalker who had already plagued him for months had returned. Last month the singer revealed the distress he had suffered as a result of the experience. 'This woman is mad. She keeps turning tip at my house and sending letters and has all sorts of wild fantasies,' he said. Kay was banned from driving for 42 days and fined £540. In a statement, Kay said: 'I have apologised in court for the speeding offence and I am relieved at the outcome. He is now considering taking legal action to deal with the stalker. 'The matter is being investigated by the police, he continued. We cannot comment any further at this time as it could prejudice any action they may wish to take.'

Gossip Article #11 | Rolling Stone.com

May 27th 1998

"Recording Without Moving"

Details on the next album and recording at Jay's mansion



*Funny how a little thing like winning an MTV award for "Best Video of the Year" ("Virtual Insanity") makes Jamiroquai's next album *anticipated.* Less than two years ago, Jamiroquai was thought to be a spicy Szechwan dish; now every granola-chewing soul left of the Atlantic -- from Phish-fried followers to VJ-savant Jesse Camp -- is wearing the same-style floppy hat donned by band frontman Jay Kay.*

Before that look gets tired (actually, it already is), Jamiroquai will be heading into a home studio located forty-five minutes outside London to do some surgical enhancement to their sound. Now in pre-production in a room adjacent to the yet-unfinished studio, the band has completed twelve tracks for the album, eight of which, according to keyboardist Toby Smith, are "album-worthy."

The studio, which doubles as a resort of sorts, overlooks the countryside and has a backyard pool for procrastination purposes. "We can be in the middle of a take, come out of the recording studio, go for a swim and say, 'ah, fuck it, it's not working,'" Smith says.

The new material will have a much more "electro-feel" to it, according to Smith. "We took a click from the drummer and used that to trigger fatter sounds and keyboard kicks and stuff like that," he says. "So, the sound will be quite a lot different, and then it'll have the classic Jamiroquai-esque sound too."

Expect the new Jamiroquai album in stores next summer.

**Gossip Article #12 | Star
December 30th 1997**

"Jamiroquai Ousted From Hotel"

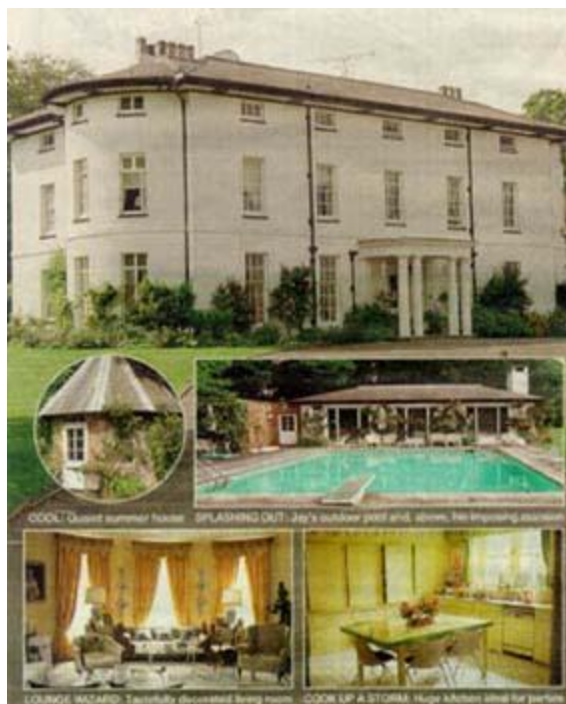
Details about the band being ousted from Skybar

The hot band Jamiroquai got kicked out of the Skybar hotel for being rowdy, even though they were paying top dollar to stay at the hotel. It seems that the band couldn't resist having a raucous pillow fight by the pool and when the lead singer lit up a funny smelling cigarette, the manager tossed them all out. To the band's credit, they didn't protest and just left quietly.

**Gossip Article #13 | News Of The World
July 27th 1997**

"Jay's Manor From Heaven"

Details about JK's posh new home and his current financial affairs



This is the haunted mansion that set back Jamiroquai star Jay Kay £1.3 million-- and you can in-spectre his hot property in these exclusive pics. The "Virtual Insanity" singer, 28-- estimated to be worth £4 million-- snapped up Horsenden Manor after yearning for the "simple life" in a country retreat. But there's nothing simple about the Buckinghamshire pile dating back to William Conqueror.

Jay may get lost in its 11 bedrooms, six bathrooms, library, ballroom, games room and wine cellar.

There is a tennis court, sauna and swimming pool plus stables, a trout lake and servant's cottage.

And the 45-acre grounds will house his £2 million collection of two Ferraris, three BMWs, an Aston Martin, a Lamborghini and a Mercedes. It is a massive change from his bachelor pad in Paddington, West London, where he preferred to kip on a mattress on the floor. But Jay recently told our glossy Sunday Magazine: "I want a place in the country with a studio, and fields where I can keep chickens and goats." The pile is said to be haunted by the playwright Sheridan-- but Jay doesn't fear repossession.

He hasn't looked back since signing an eight-album deal with Sony worth £100,000 in 1993.

His first three have sold ten million copies. The latest, Travelling Without Moving, has earned songwriter Jay £750,000 and is still shifting.

He has had ten hit singles such as "Too Young To Die," "Return Of The Space Cowboy" and "Cosmic Girl," and had six sell-out tours. His graft has paid off in other ways too-- the band is currently nominated for ten MTV Music Awards.

Fast Track To Fortune

Feb. 1993	<i>Jay Kay's band land eight-LP Sony deal worth:</i>	£100,000
Jun. 1993	<i>Debut Emergency On Planet Earth released. 3 million sold. Four hit singles:</i>	£900,000
Oct. 1994	<i>Follow-up Return Of The Space Cowboy issued. 4 million copies sold so far. Two worldwide hit singles:</i>	£1.2m
Aug. 1996	<i>Third LP, Travelling Without Moving, released. 3 million copies sold to date:</i>	£800,000
1993 to 1997	<i>Net Profit from six sell-out world tours, and income from merchandising:</i>	£1m

**Gossip Article #14 | The Sun
June 19th 1997
"The Jay-Cloth"**

JK gets "caught" washing his Mercedes in front of his London home



Wash going on? Jay Kay can afford to pay someone else to clean his car.

But the millionaire singer's so mad on his souped up Mercedes that he was happy to get to work with the J-Cloth himself to bring the sparkle back after it caught in a downpour. The 28-year-old Jamiroquai star had just been for a burn up with a pal in the P-reg silver AMG E-Class Merc near his plush West London home.

Jay, who owns eight supercars worth £2million, was out again within minutes of returning home to clean up his prized motor. One on-looker said "He didn't look too happy about it. His pride and joy was soaked.

"He spent ages touching the car up and had it gleaming again before he went back inside. You can tell cars are his life." Jay's other motors are two Ferraris, three BMWs, an Aston Martin and a Lamborghini.

Last year he copped a six-month ban after being caught speeding for the fourth time - and a pal wrote off his 200mph Lamborghini Diablo.

Gossip Article #15 | Evening Standard

August 6th 1993

"Will Jason End Up Over The Rainbow?"

Speculation as to Jay Kay's possible political career

There are moves afoot to turn Jason Kay of Jamiroquai into a politician. He is being approached by Rainbow George Weiss, guiding spirit behind the Rainbow Connection, to act as figurehead and rallying point for that lovable organisation's onslaught on next June's European elections.

Rainbow George describes the Rainbow Connection as an 'idealistic, futuristic, somewhat mystical movement dedicated to playing a part in inspiring moves towards the creation of a world not dissimilar to the one John Lennon asked us to Imagine.'

In plain English, the Rainbows are anti-Europe, pro-full employment, anti-tax and paper money, pro-free distribution of basic necessities. Their ultimate aim is to rename the UK as the Emerald Rainbow Islands.

Commented George yesterday: 'Should Jay Kay say yes to leading the Rainbow revolution, the emergency on planet Earth will be well and truly confronted.'

Apart from Jason Kay, other musical luminaries targeted by George as kindred spirits include Hothouse Flowers, World Party and the Waterboys. Rod Stewart is not thought to be involved.

SUB-SECTION #3: Controversy Articles

Jamiroquai and controversy seem to go hand in hand ever since the band of 'When You Gonna Learn' music video in the US and their joining of protest rallies.

Controversy Article #1 | Melody Maker

October 2nd 1993

"Whale Of A Gig"

Jamiroquai protests whaling done by Denmark

Jamiroquai played a short set outside the Danish embassy last week in a protest at whale culling around the Danish controlled Faroe islands.

Jamiroquai turned up outside the embassy in south west London on the back of a flat bed truck at 4.30 on Friday afternoon. Prior to this, the truck had parked in Sloane Square where Jamiroquai played "When You Gonna Learn." The truck was moved on by police, and, as it made

its way down Sloane Street, jamiroquai played a new song, "The Kids," which will be released as a single next month.

The plugs were eventually pulled when a policeman boarded the truck as it neared the embassy. Jamiroquai continued on foot to the building.

The demonstration was one of many organised that weekend by The Environmental Investigation Agency - others included protests outside supermarkets selling Faroese fish products.

A Jamiroquai spokesperson said: "Although chains such as the Asda group have stopped selling Faroese fish as a result of the campaign, there are many supermarket chains who continue to subsidise these barbaric activities."

It's reckoned up to 1,500 whales a year are slaughtered by the Danish Government.

Controversy Article #2 | Melody Maker

July 24th 1993

"I Can't Believe It's Not Stevie Wonder!"

British housewives invited to judge the difference between JK and Stevie

British housewives - can't tell the difference between Jamiroquai and Stevie Wonder.

Yes, tests have proved it - nine out of 10 consumers can't tell the difference between Jamiroquai and Stevie Wonder! It tastes, smells, even sounds like the same thing!

We invited passers-by in the street to see if they could tell them apart. We played them extracts from "Innervisions," Stevie Wonder's seminal 1973 album, followed by anything from Jamiroquai.

These were some of the responses we got!

"I was amazed. When they told me these were two different artists altogether you could have knocked me down with a feather!"

-Mr. GR, St Albans

"I was astonished. After all, I could even tell Big Star and Teenage Fanclub apart. But this is quite extraordinary. A near-perfect imitation! Three cheers for Mr. Jamiroquai!"

-Mrs. SP, Glasgow

"When I played this to my husband and the kids, none of them could tell the difference. For today on we've decided to stop buying Jamiroquai's records and buy Stevie Wonder's instead!"

-Mrs. WT, Shrewsbury (Er, surely the other way round? -Jamiroquai's record company)

So, there it is. Jamiroquai! Just like Stevie Wonder - with no additives whatsoever! Plus, we guarantee that listening to Jamiroquai as part of a calorie-controlled diet can help you lose weight!

**Controversy Article #3 | Evening Standard
July 16th 1993**

"Exposing A Double Pop Scam"

JK: young, stupid, and white?

Much amusement and mayhem has resulted from the poster campaign mounted by new band CNN. The poster for their new single showed the unmistakable Jamiroquai profile in slightly wonky form overprinted with the unflattering slogan 'Young Stupid & White.'

According to CNN, the poster is aimed at 'exposing pop's marketing plans masquerading as human beings.' It certainly exposed raw nerves at Sony, Jamiroquai's record company, and within the band's management, who have reportedly made their feelings clear to CNN's manager in the most direct manner.

CNN also invited the public to call a phone number on the poster to register which of pop's hopeful monsters should grace the next effort. The winner was gingerly soulful Mick Hucknall of Simply Red and once again a sense-of-humour failure was spotted at record company level. A spokesperson from Mick's label said: 'Everyone likes a bit of fun, but it's not funny when one band makes capital off the back of another.'

In a further development, CNN reportedly received a breathless phone call from Welsh neo-punks the Manic Street Preachers. In a reversal of form, the desperate Manics actually wanted to be on the poster that everyone else was trying to get off. However, CNN turned them down on the sound principle that 'they weren't well known enough.'

**Controversy Article #4 | Evening Standard
June 25th 1993**

"When You Gonna Learn" video banned in the US

Following the success of Jamiroquai's debut LP, Emergency on Planet Earth, Rumours has received news that planet earth may not be listening.

Reports from America suggest that the band's US record company is having kittens over the video which has been put together to accompany the release of the debut US single, When You Gonna Learn. Interspersed between live shots of the band is footage depicting scenes of the Holocaust, Nazis, the LA riots, ivory poaching, oil slicks and disgusting whaling practices.

It appears the record company thinks that pop songs, being essentially frivolous things, should not be allowed to associate with images from the real world, such as those you might see on any news bulletin.

**SUB-SECTION #4
Generic Distinctions Articles**

Jamiroquai has always been had to place in one certain category, in fact, magazines even today still can't find the perfect home for them.

G.D. Article #1 | Chicago Tribune
September 8th 1995
“Space Jam” By Chauncy Hollingsworth
Acid jazz? disco funk? hip-hop? Rave?

Acid Jazz, it seems, is a musical form shrouded in contention. If it exists, that is. Jamiroquai's vocalist, songwriter and funky provocateur Jay Kay isn't so sure.

"It may, for a while, have been made into a type of music," says Kay, the spaceman behind "The Return of the Space Cowboy," the second full-length release from the band Jamiroquai. "A lot of people have misused the term here in England. Why it's called acid jazz . . . It's just record label, and for a time there, I tried to distance myself from 'acid jazz.'"

A little-known cultural exchange between the hip-hop movement in America and the ravers in England, acid jazz is the subject of much dispute. To those involved in 1990 with Giant Step, the ground-breaking New York acid jazz club, it meant the union of live instrumentation and hip-hop beats played by a deejay. In England, it was a glib, pigeonholing reference from promoter Jiles Peterson about jazz-friendly collectives like the Brand New Heavies. European trends in acid jazz influenced American performers, who in turn took it to new levels of improvisational interplay, reflexively spawning new ideas for English groups like Jamiroquai.

"It's something in line with fashion," says Kay, "and when fashion and music team up together . . . when the fashion goes, the music goes, and it's not as popular now in England as it once was."

Indeed, groundbreaking groups like the Brand New Heavies have shifted gears continuously, moving into a disco-soul territory that only vaguely draws on jazz and hip-hop. Jamiroquai's "The Return of the Space Cowboy" follows the same path, taking a decidedly Stevie Wonder-like route in both Kay's vocals and his band's mixture of playful instrumental grooves and synthesized boogie noises.

"I think it will be even more disco-funky on the next one," Kay claims, already thinking ahead to his next experiment. "A lot of that has to do with the drumming; we wanted to concentrate on 'space.' The song 'Light Years' is a great example of that space. I think we're not so busy all the time; that created a more disco-y type feel."

Referring to the still-underground status of Jamiroquai (a play on "jam," an improv session, and "Iroquois," the Native American tribe), Kay vents some frustrations.

"There's a sad problem, in a way, within the record companies in the States: One guy does one thing and everybody pushes the same sort of thing, and I watch MTV and I'll watch 20 soul videos, or 20 hip-hop videos, and they're all the same . . . I do get slightly frustrated, and I wonder when we're gonna start kicking off in this country. We also do it live: You get two hours of musicianship, and songs that vary as well."

Perhaps Jamiroquai will find a larger audience at their show this Sunday at the Metro.

G.D. Article #2 | Sour Times
April 19th 1995

“Acid Reign Or Acid Test” By Glory Boy

Acid Jazz. Just a record label or an expression of that Ealing feeling? [Sour Times](#) dons some Adidas for a closer look.

Acid Jazz. Just a record label or an expression of that Ealing feeling? Sour Times dons some Adidas for a closer look.

It seems that those two four-letter words have become omnipresent and kind of omnipotent in an all too excitable and manipulative pop music industry. The same industry that will try and flog us East 17 and Suede one week before attempting to sell us Boyzone and Oasis the next. Neither the band nor the fans have a chance to settle in and get cosy. No wonder most bands feel obliged to keep producing chart-oriented fodder. Their contracts depend on it and acid jazz is therefore in danger of becoming diluted. Everyone is jumping on the bandwagon and adding their own stereotypical ingredients to give the music that acid jazz (as opposed to Acid Jazz, the record label) feel and therefore, they presume, some kind of credibility (have you heard the soundtrack to the latest British Rail advert?) So where did acid jazz come from? The prefix “acid” may just be an attempt to revive the form commercially just as it was used for House music. This is how the current situation may appear at first. However, it’s a mite more complex than that and, love it or hate it, acid jazz has become bigger than its originators (if there are such things for entire genres of music) could have anticipated. Acid jazz is often slated as just a repackaging of ‘70’s jazz-funk or, if you like, plain retro bollocks. When Acid Jazz (the label) was formed by Eddie Piller and Giles Peterson, the influences were never denied because they knew that if the music was good enough then the number of records sold and any passing fashions would be irrelevant. People like good music. It’s as simple as that. With this basic ethic in mind and a determination to stick to their guns they fostered a “...jazz style with punk attitudes,” as it was put in the magazine Straight No Chaser. “[Acid Jazz was] a loud, precocious child that made all the right noises on the dance floor and put a few noses out of joint in the jazz establishment.” These are probably the same noses that were dislocated when Herbie Hancock, Roy Ayers, Jimmy Castor, Donald Byrd et al started fusing jazz and funk on a scale that had never before been tackled. But the majority of those who are now immersed in the scene are far too young to remember it first time ‘round and so it is as good as new to them. Arguments against artists just “being retro” are ill-founded partly for this reason. Music is made for enjoyment and whether it is enjoyed by someone in the ‘70’s listening to the Rolling Stones or someone in the ‘90’s listening to Primal Scream makes no difference whatsoever. Probably the biggest kick up the arse the scene had (although some have suggested it was the first step on a long spiral downwards) was the release of Jamiroquai’s first single by Acid Jazz. The band were soon signed to Sony and frontman Jay (along with his equally well-recognised hat) became an overnight celebrity. He had a voice to kill for and, apart from the lyrics and production, he wrote songs in a surprisingly authentic ‘70’s style. He brought the song structure of Stevie Wonder and the voice of Gil Scott-Heron to the top 40. This was where the explosion began. The seeds had been sown several years before, but this became the dawn of an era where those two little four-letter words made pleasant noises in the ears of big record company bosses. The agonised screams of acid jazz purists were heard for miles around as more and more Herbie Hancock samples were being heard on national radio stations day by day. The problem lay in the necessary evils of categorisation. By one definition the Brand New Heavies are the epitome of acid jazz whereas others would class them as little more than a pop group with a few funky base lines and a wah-wah pedal, something they themselves have admitted. So it seems that some people will always believe acid jazz to be the private province of Mother Earth, Corduroy, the Heavies and a few others. However, legend has it

that Giles Peterson and a chum sat down behind the decks one night, after the doors to the club had long since locked up, and played several hours of dancefloor jazz with a hint of funk. This, purists believe, is acid jazz. On the good side, it can't be denied that the recent boom has helped in the promotion of smaller labels such as Dorado, Mo' Wax, Talkin' Loud (now run by Giles Peterson), and the popularity of arch-jazz-samplers US3 hasn't done the rebirth of the influential Blue Note label any harm. And finally, when it comes down to it, Jamiroquai were getting the names of Scott-Heron and Ayers into the mainstream music press (while on the next page someone was condemning jazz as ``arty-farty nonsense -- long live Rock 'n' Roll") and US3 were having Hancock's Cantaloupe Island riff played daily on the Simon Mayo Radio Show. This just lead more and more people onto the scene. The vast majority of the new converts are quite happy to stick within the more radio-friendly confines of the acid jazz movement, but there are now a lot more people who follow the gospel according to the Jazz Funk greats of yore and preventing it from becoming a strictly underground thing. Two years ago, Donald Byrd's Places and Spaces album was a purely specialist record shop affair. Now they carpet the floors of Virgin and HMV with the buggers. That can't be a bad thing... can it?

**G.D. Article #3 | Billboard
September 18th 1993**

“Eclectro: UK’s Thriving Jazz Groove” By Vivien Goldman

Jamiroquai and the "eclectro" movement

ECLECTRO SUPERSTAR

But it was on the Acid Jazz label that the first tracks by eclectro's first superstar, Jamiroquai, were released; his debut was heralded in the pages of the Chaser last summer. This summer, "Emergency On Planet Earth," Jamiroquai's first album on Sony's subsidiary label, S2, topped the British pop chart, spending six weeks in the top 10, and has sold approximately 280,000 units in the U.K., 100,000 in Germany, and 40,000 in France, according to the band's spokesperson, Jason Jules.

As his self-created name (a fusion of "Iroquois" and "jammin fe Jamaica") suggests, Jamiroquai, born Jason Kay and nicknamed JK, finds his inspiration in cultural roots. The goofy logo he sketched one day, of himself in silhouette, toes turned out beneath flares and trademark buffalo hat set at an endearing angle, gave him an instantly zany personality. His righteous commitment to ecological causes and fervent anti-political stance ("Politicians, you'd better keep your distance," he sings) touched a record-buying chord in Britons of all ages and colors.

COMING TO AMERICA

With its infectious extended melodic hooks and summery, Stevie Wonder-like groove, the cute, conscious pop icon is poised to penetrate the U.S. market.

However, the multicultural eclectro scene encompasses something of a musical melting pot that some of its proponents feel will have difficulty finding a place in the U.S.

"It's a very British scene, because of the cosmopolitan nature of the society--we're close to Europe . . . We have an eclectic interest in breaking down barriers of music," Peterson says.

Over at S2 (also home to Sunchilde, electro's new buzz band) some concern is felt about Jamiroquai's potential fate in the U.S. The label's director of A&R, Lincoln Elias, himself a black Briton, says, "I find the rigid formatting of American radio amusing, because it's so segregated--but it's sad, too."

Their fears are relevant to the international success of all Britain's electro talent, from the Young Disciples to the slew of street-scene songbirds like Misty Oldland, Shara Nelson, Jhelisa Barnes (sister of Carleen Anderson, late of the Young Disciples), Alison Evelyn, and Vanessa Simon.

Bradshaw credits a few American record people as having "wised up" about electro, among them Orlando Aguilla at Delicious Vinyl, who signed the Brand New Heavies, and Sylvia Rhone at EastWest, who picked up the former Acid Jazz group, D-Influence.

However, he notes, "on the whole, America doesn't understand what's going on at all."

His disappointment is fueled by the 15-month delay between the U.K. and U.S. releases of the Young Disciples' much-lauded first album, at which time electro fans in England felt that much creative and business momentum was lost. By the time the album was released in the U.S. in January 1993, the lead singer had already left the band.

According to a PolyGram spokesperson, the delay was a question of timing and scheduling.

Jamiroquai's manager Kevin Sampson recalls, "I was surprised in America to go round to the 'white department' and 'black department'; in England it's all in one. We've said we want to be handled by both sides.

"The problem we find in America is that we don't fit into any of their categories or pigeonholes, because of the multiracial thing. It's unusual in America, whereas in the circles I mix in, it's perfectly normal."

G.D. Article #4 | Time Out

July 21st-28th 1993

"Acid Attack" By David Sinclair

Acid Jazz the record label celebrates its fifth birthday

'What the fuck is Acid Jazz?' asked Jamiroquai in a Drum magazine interview. 'You know what that is to me? It's about white people trying to make black music.'

Acid Jazz, the record label, is five years old and its most famous discovery to date has pinpointed its underlying weakness. The company was founded by Gilles Peterson and Eddie Piller, its name a sideswipe at the '80s Acid House boom. Peterson later left to set up Talkin' Loud, just as the label's most successful signings have also gradually moved on- Galliano, D-Influence, Brand New Heavies and Jamiroquai. Although its independence means it can release material the majors won't touch, its small size prevents it from keeping its chart-topping prodigies.

Acid Jazz, the music, is a hotch-potch of musical styles spanning rap, funk, soul, Latin and jazz. Indeed it has little to do with real jazz and everything to do with the late '70s/early '80s Brit sunk scene. Musically it's an extension of native funk combos like Light of the World.

The sound which the Acid Jazz label helped promote is of course now being spawned by other indie labels, like Dorado, Soul-Jazz and Tongue and Groove. Then there's the majors, most of whom have their own Acid Jazz-ish acts: Sony's Jamiroquai, Big Life's James Taylor Quartet, MCA's

Oui 3, London's Brand New Heavies, Island's 'Rebirth of Cool' compilations and Phonogram's Talkin' Loud roster.

After the label and the music, there's Acid Jazz the style and life-style. The beads, long hair and Islamic references are straight from the '70s clothes-horse. And while Piller et al deserve praise for the musical integrity that they champion- real instruments, thoughtful lyrics and a belief in playing live- its marketing repels as many as it attracts. Few blacks go to Acid Jazz clubs nor, until the success of Jamiroquai and BNH, has its popularity extended beyond southern England. Paul Weller describes its followers as 'today's mods.'

A photographic exhibition to celebrate the Acid Jazz birthday is worth a look, however, while the label's tenth 'Totally Wired' compilation promises well for the future. But if it's going to survive another five years, it would do well to consider the words of its opinionated son. The music deserves a wider audience.

SUB-SECTION #5: Other News Articles

Jamiroquai has quickly spread its influence over many parts of the world and into our cultures. From Music to fashion, the word has spread of who they are and what they do.

Other News Article #1 | Watch March 1998

"Jamiroquai Protects Endangered Species"

More about JK's adopted rhino

"I've adopted this Rhino to help protect the species," said the eco-conscious funkateer, "So that when I have children of my own they will be able to see one too." Jamiroquai hopes to raise money through a series of benefit concerts for one of the world's most endangered species and their charity Tusk Force.

Meanwhile, rumours continue to swirl around that a remix album is in the works. Until then, fans of the band can pick up a recently released box set compilation of all of Jamiroquai's singles.

Other News Article #2 | USA Today February 4th 1998

"Jay Kay On Digital Piracy"

JK's comments on the Jamiroquai WWW sites

Says singer Jay Kay of Jamiroquai: "I don't know what people have put up [on the Internet], but if people want to put things up and share the same philosophies and basic ideals, I don't see anything wrong with that. Because Jamiroquai is one of those things that people just share, you know?"

Other News Article #3 | Entertainment Weekly October 10th 1997

“Phat Hat” By Tricia Laine

A brief feature on Louis Vuitton's latest hat, designed especially for JK



Before we knew his name, we knew his hat. The recent success of Jamiroquai owes a lot to singer Jay Kay's tall, extra-fuzzy topper, made by Brit designer Brian Harris. Kay, 26, admits his signature mad hatting is a bit of self-promotion. "It's difficult," Kay says, "to forget someone with a strange name you can't pronounce-- and a large hat." Knockoffs of the Dr. Suess-style hat are cropping up in flea markets. Even Louis Vuitton has tipped its cap by giving Kay a chapeau covered in its logos. "I'm particular about the hats I wear," says Kay, "and when I pulled it out of the box, I thought it wasn't going to work. But actually I liked it [because] it's so malleable." But what's underneath the hat worn by this cat? "Just some fast-receding hair," says Kay, "and the remnants of a brain."

Other News Article #4 | New York Daily News

September 28th 1997

“His Masters Voice” By George Rush & Joanna Molloy

JK finally meets Stevie Wonder



A group of 30 hip-hop guys had an incredible comeback when they were stopped at the door to a private party at Metronome: "We're with Donald Trump." Yes, they weren't lying. Thursday night, rapmaster Donny T was hangin' with the homies, tryin' to get a mack on. Trump and his young blond date joined Mike Tyson, L.L. Cool J., Stevie Wonder and Russell Simmons at a birthday party for exiled Motown record exec Andre Harrell. Trump started the night at a taping of "MTV

Unplugged," where Wonder performed with Eric Clapton and Babyface. Then it was onto the opening of Justin's, Sean (Puffy) Combs' new restaurant near Metronome on W. 21st.

His Masters Voice

Speaking of Wonder, he sure gave a thrill to Jamiroquai star Jay Kay the night before. JK, whose voice is indebted to Wonder's, came over to the Phoenix House benefit at the Manhattan Center just to meet his idol. "The man has a direct line to God," Kay told us. "He dials 0 and says, 'Could you please tell me what my next song will be?" The young soul rebel finally called up the courage to introduce himself to Wonder who said, "Yeah, I know you, man. You're great." Kay started to cry.

Jamiroquai singer Jay Kay was in soul heaven Wednesday when he met Stevie Wonder. The British singer must have been floating on the feeling when his band played at the outdoor party thrown by Louis Vuitton for MoMa at Rockefeller Center the next night. The British band just about melted the ice rink.

Other News Article #5 | Newsweek

August 4th 1997

"Jam On It"

Announcement of Jamiroquai's nominations at the MTV Video Music Awards and notice of the band's impending infiltration of the US music scene



His style may be Cat-in-the-Hat, but last week MTV crowned him top dog. Gen-X's jazzy Jamiroquai, led by frontman Jay Kay, took 10 MTV Video Music Award nominations-- more than any other act. The group's been a smash with Britain's club kids since 1992, but didn't grab the U.S. market until its videos started spinning on MTV in March. Its much heralded video "Virtual Insanity" comes from the band's third CD, "Travelling Without Moving"-- which has yet to crack even a million in stateside sales. Until maybe tomorrow.

Other News Article #6 | Entertainment Weekly

May 30th 1997

"Explaining 'Virtual' Reality" By Tom Sinclair

A look at the making of the "Virtual Insanity" video

Plenty of music videos try to dazzle viewers with bombastic visual effects, a predictable strategy that often feels more enervating than entertaining. But "Virtual Insanity," the vertigo-inducing video from U.K. pop-soul band Jamiroquai, achieves its eye-catching look through a technique that's so simple you can almost do it at home.

Now in heavy rotation on MTV, the video focuses on singer (and Stevie Wonder soundalike) Jason Kay in a blue-and-white room that just won't stay still. As Kay bops, struts, strikes poses, and lip-synchs, the walls close in, the furniture moves in odd directions, and the laws of time and space seem to dissolve before our eyes. An acid casualty's worst nightmare, the video has started a head-scratching epidemic among puzzled viewers who can't help but mutter, "How'd they do that?"

Director Jonathan Glazer (Blur's "Universal"), who recently won the Music Video Producers Association's Music Video of the Year award for "Virtual Insanity," chuckles as he reveals that there was nothing "virtual" about his methods. "No computer trickery was used," he says. "What we did was put the whole set on wheels and attach the camera to one wall. The furniture also had little wheels, and we had guys moving the set and the furniture [outside of the frame]. The floor never moved. It was like a magician's trick."

Kay confesses to having become "a bit dizzy" during the carefully choreographed shoot but says he is more than pleased with the results. The video's high MTV profile is giving Jamiroquai's third album, Travelling Without Moving, a welcome boost in the States (where the band has yet to duplicate its massive overseas success). "Often in the past, we've had good songs, but our videos haven't been up to scratch," says Kay. "This time out, it's all working together."

**Other News Article #7 | The Daily Record
April 9th 1994
"Stay Cool With A Hat"**

Jamiroquai announces its Orenda clothing line designed by Joe Komodo

Bored this weekend and got some spare wool lying around the house?

Well here's a way to kill a few hours and increase your coolness factor by about 10 points.

Knit a Jay Kay hat. Knit one, purl one, sew on some Scandinavian ear flaps, tie some tying thingies and you're set.

The guys from Jamiroquai were looking hot in items from their new Orenda range of clothing by trendy designers Komodo. Despite his designer togs, Jay still looked like he could do with a good bath. Someone pass him the Matey.

**Other News Article #8 | The Herald (Glasgow)
February 12th 1994
"Cannabis Hemp High On Style"**

Details about Joe Komodo's plans for Jamiroquai's clothing line

Komodo is that funky, globe-trotting brand name with an ironic and innovative grasp on fashion. They have a whole raft of outrageous ideas that keep the punters interested. Any right-minded clubber would have checked out by now the Stormin' Norman camouflage gear and the Tough Hip Hop fashions of Urban Dancefloor guerrillas. But, frankly, the latest idea takes the biscuit and is guaranteed to give the authorities apoplexy. It is

cannabis hemp clothing made from the finest Nepali ganja plants. Not to worry, the only highs going are on style and not drug induced.

To confirm their position as fashion's hippest and most ecologically-sound label, Komodo has wooed the ecology preaching pop band Jamiroquai to launch a new line called Orenda. The name is apparently a native American Indian term for an ambient social environment.

Designed by Joe Komodo and Jay Kay from the band, the range reflects the eclectic, ethnic-inspired image of the singer and Komodo's Himalayan trekker-style look. The collection of Bhutanese tapestry jeans, big handwoven cotton shirts and fisherman's tops come with an original usage of buffalo horn, twig and shell fastenings.

Komodo spirited his way to the cultural front line on the back of the Acid House revolution making fluorescent clothing, hooded tee-shirts and acid-hued waistcoats.

It got caught up in the Pucci psychedelic revival a few seasons ago and then got bitten by the ethnic bug and produced batik parkas, ponchos and frayed ikat trousers.

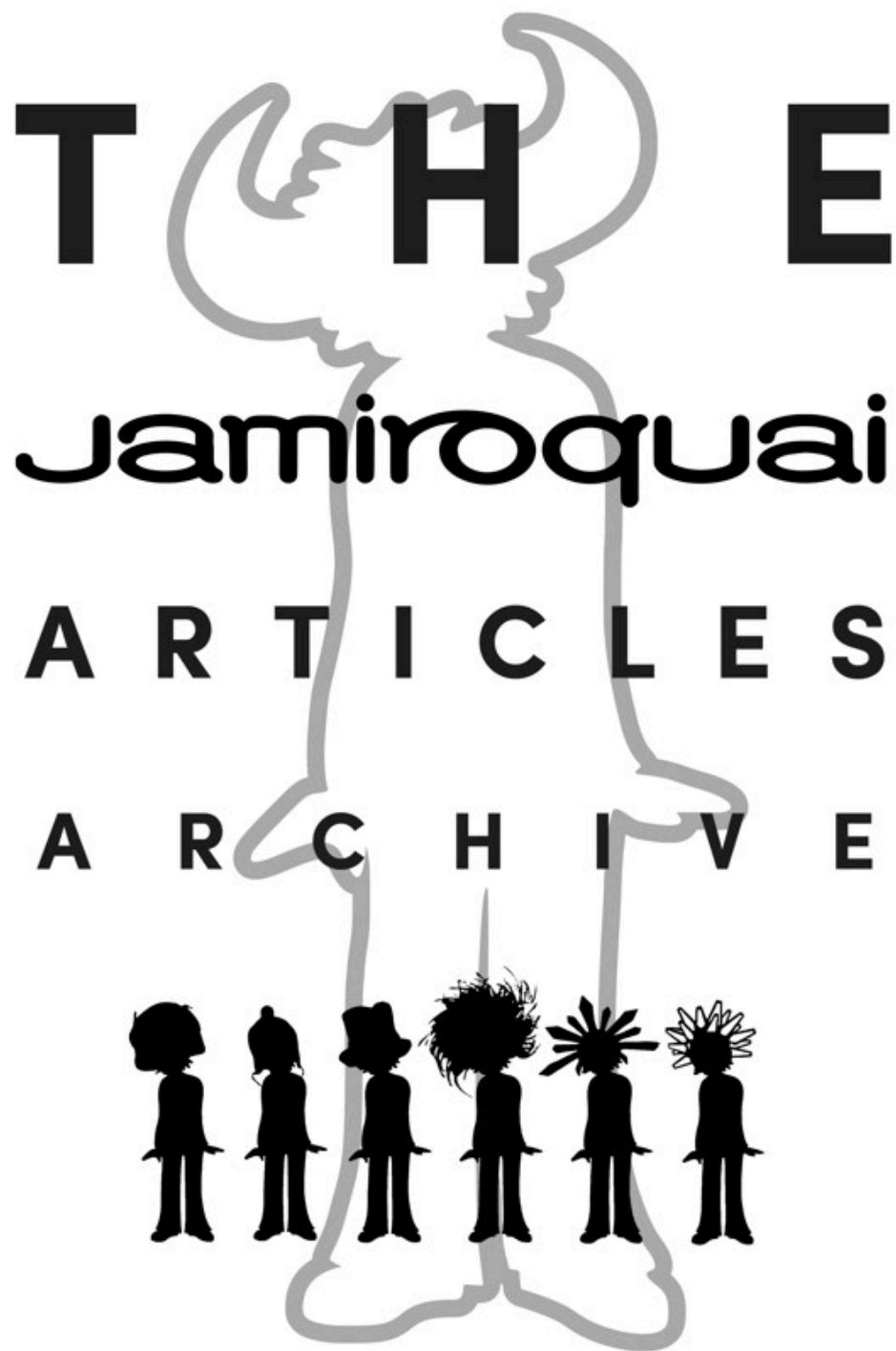
Komodo, though, has a conscience, for the bulk of their collection is made by workshops in the far-flung regions of Guatemala, Nepal, and Java. It is the use of natural materials and their network of Third World co-operatives which appealed to Jamiroquai. The collection is strikingly individual and evocative of the band's own handle on music.

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THE OFFICIAL RELEASE COVER ART: (By Ricky Of The JK Hat Official Jamiroquai Discord Server)



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