



blue sky
Pete

Pete Murray is back with a new album. He talks to Matt Myers about playing James Bond, his admiration for Madonna and being backstage with Amy Winehouse.

DNA: Your video for Always A Winner is very James Bond. Where did that idea come from?

Pete: I had the idea when I was over in LA recording the album [*Blue Sky Blue*]. Originally I wanted a cross between Bruce Lee and James Bond and we ended up going for Bond because the action was easier to do. I wanted to do something different from the standard music video and make more of a short film. I'm planning to do a sequel for the next single, where I get away with the girl but end up getting chased by the bad guys.

Would you ever try your hand at acting?

I would, actually. It depends on what comes up. I was once asked to play the role of a musician, but I don't want to do that. They wanted me to be a busker in a romance thing where a girl walks past, but I don't really want to play myself.

You're looking pretty sharp in the video. How do you feel about gay guys finding you hot?

I've got plenty of gay mates, both guys and girls, and I'm totally fine with it. When the first album, *Feeler*, came out in 2003 I remember doing interviews then and discovering that gay guys liked me. I'm totally

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cool with it. I live around Byron Bay and it's very open to all that stuff.

Have you ever been mistaken as gay?

No, not that I'm aware of...

You're too damn manly!

[Laughing] Yeah, you could probably pick me a mile away.

How good is your gaydar?

Not that great. There are some guys I can pick because they are very camp, but I've been in a situation where I'm talking to a guy and didn't know he was gay. A few other people knew, but I had no idea.

If you were gay, who would you go for?

Edward Norton is my favourite actor, but I'd say a young Robert De Niro. He's a very handsome man.

Who in the music industry inspires you?

I've always digged the older stuff like Neil Young and Bob Dylan, that old-style singer/songwriter. But for the new album I haven't really had inspiration from anyone. I've hardly listened to any music and have just been writing. I've been in Pete Murray world for a long time. It's more about what I can get out of it, rather than being influenced by anyone else.

Is there a particular theme in the new album?

It's all electric and has more of a groove to it, kind of a California '70s style. It's also a little bit emotional in parts. I guess I've gone back to some of the earlier stuff that I wrote, which is quite honest. But it's not down, it's quite uplifting.

Given the dramatic changes over the past decade, how do you see the future for the marketing and selling of music?

Not many people buy CDs any more, as they are all downloaded now, and I think the internet has become more of a marketing tool. It's a great way to get your music across the world, where anyone can see it. In a way, it's disabled the record labels and even to some level the media. We always relied heavily on TV and radio to get the music out there, whereas these days the internet is the media. I don't know how it's going to work in the future, but artists are now directly in touch with their fans. Word of mouth is probably going to be the biggest way of getting our music out there.

Your album covers are always very cool. How much input do you have into them?

They're all my ideas. Everything with the music and artwork is all up to me. I have people

around me that I bump ideas off, then the art department puts things together for me. But they are normally very simple photos. The new album cover is actually the simplest idea that we've had. It's very basic, whereas in the past I've always liked busy covers with background things to look at.

The street photo from your first album is quite iconic now. Where was that taken?

That was right on the border of Fitzroy and Carlton in Melbourne.

Are there any particular people in the music industry that you hang out with?

I'm friendly with the guys from Powderfinger. Darren Middleton, their guitarist, played on my last album and Ian Haug, the other guitarist, helped me out with some demos early on, before I released my first album.

Have you met any of your icons?

At one stage there was a chance that I could meet Neil Young and I was pretty excited about that because I'm a big fan, but it didn't come off. But one time I was back stage at a Pearl Jam concert and I was talking to the Kings Of Leon guys who were supporting them. Pearl Jam came out a couple of metres away from us and walked onto the stage. The crowd was roaring

and it was a pretty exciting time.

John Waters has his tribute show to John Lennon and Tex Perkins does Johnny Cash. Would you consider a similar type of show?

I really love Nick Drake's music and my voice is very similar to his, so if I was going to do anyone it'd probably be him.

When you were growing up, were you ever into glam bands like Queen, Bowie or ABBA?

I liked parts, but I never fully got into them. As I got older I started to appreciate Queen's music a lot more. My favourite ABBA song is *The Winner Takes It All*. That's a beautiful song.

If you had to pick one diva, who would it be?

Madonna. She's really sexy and she's had great songs right through from the early days until now. She's definitely a survivor, too. She's 50-something now and still looks pretty good for her age.

Were you shocked by Amy Winehouse's death?

I played a festival a couple of years ago over in England and they had backstage rooms for the artists. I was actually right next door to Pete Doherty and Amy Winehouse, as they were going out at the time. Later she was sitting on the grass right next to us having a drink and she looked really, really frail even back then. So I wasn't really surprised when she died, but it's very sad.

What is your porn name (your first pet and the street you grew up in)?

[Laughing] Snoopy Edith!

What's the best piece of advice you've received?

Probably just to trust your gut instinct. With your art, music, business... with everything you do.

Your website sells panties for the ladies, but no jocks for the blokes!

Yes, I'm working on that. In my song *So Beautiful* there's the line, "You think you're bigger than mighty Joe." When we did the female undies we put "So Beautiful" across the bum, so for the guys we were thinking of putting on the front "Bigger than mighty Joe". We never got around to it, but we've got to have something for the guys.

Plenty of DNA readers would wear them!

Absolutely. I've got a good fan-base there. I need some tips from the readers for what I should put on my jocks!

What are you into? Jocks, boxers or freeballing?

Jocks. I like everything tucked away nice and firm. I don't like things being too loose. But on the beach I freeball in my boardies.

Pete Murray's new album *Blue Sky Blue* is out on September 16 through Sony Music.