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MILES KANE

In recent years Miles Kane made the move from LA to London after the Last Shadow Puppets gigs came to an end. He talks LA temptations, the realisation of becoming an adult, childhood memories and new LP Change The Show.

Words Amy Mullen-Brown

Above photo Single artwork

“I’m nowhere near close to the top of the mountain. I constantly feel like i’m going up that long steep hill.”

It’s a little late for Miles Kane to be coming of age, as he is fast approaching 36. He is a rock star, after all, and has toured the world with Alex Turner and their band the Last Shadow Puppets. He’s now a soloist with a Top 10 Solo Album and has lived in Birkenhead, London and LA. Surely, he knew he was growing up? Not according to Kane, who says his new album *Change The Show* is all about how he has finally welcomed adulthood into his thirties.

“It’s hard to admit that’s me, to portray myself in that way. That’s probably why I didn’t realise I was writing about myself until people started pointing it out. It sounds like I’ve turned into a right bore, doesn’t it? Have I? I hope not. These are the most honest songs I’ve ever written. The album is me, as I am now; old, apparently,” says Kane.

With acceptance of his age, the lyrics in the opening track of his new album, *Tears Are Falling* theatrically set the scene, ‘I’m done with playing the fool/ bending all the rules’. His realities are encompassed within the album with his songs reflecting his own emotions of life as an adult.

Kane came to a realisation just prior to the release of his album *Coup De Grace*, in 2018, that his life needed to change. He’d moved to America from the UK while touring with the Last Shadow Puppets (the band he formed with Arctic Monkey’s frontman, Alex Turner) and stayed long after the gigs had stopped, waiting for something to happen.



Left, Miles Kane and Alex Turner’s friendship. Right, during Last Shadow Puppets.



He says: “When I was going back to my day job of being solo after the (Last Shadow) Puppets I didn’t really have a career in America. No one else was really knocking on my door after The Puppets. It was quite depressing. I had everything and then all of a sudden it just stopped. I found it really hard.

▼ Miles Kane performing on his *Coup De Grace* tour



“At the time I don’t think I was ready to admit that for about a year after and then all of a sudden something clicked and I thought ‘there was no point in me being here anymore’. It’s okay if you’re rich and famous but LA always felt like a holiday, never a home.

“I had everything then all of a sudden it just stopped. I found it hard.”

“The moment the penny dropped I was itching to come home. I moved to Bethnal Green and came back down to earth. Visually, it’s a world away from LA. I felt like a kid going home to me mam’s – comfortable, content, with my old drive back.”

As soon as he left, he began writing soulful, upbeat songs, and working on *Change The Show*, the most honest and soulful album he has ever written.

“In terms of my lyrics, I write very personal and let the lyrics take hold of me. I don’t like to overthink when I write. I just use my emotions and run with it. I enjoy the intensity and that intensity is quite beautiful.

“I get strong feelings for sure when I’m performing such personal lyrics but I feel comfortable showing my emotions and letting my emotions take over,” says Kane.

The new album differs from the previous ones and shows Kane’s real-life emotions that have never been shown on this scale before. *Change The Show* is a joyous, sax-soaked ‘Motown-meets-Northern-Soul’ album, as explained on a press release and incorporates elements of classic rock, Motown, soul and Fifties R&B. Previous album, *Coup De Grace*, was largely indie rock and alternative rock with lyrics much more detached from Miles.

Growing up in Birkenhead, near Liverpool, Miles was in the school orchestra and played saxophone, this is where his passion for music stemmed. Miles was also in a band and after school would go to a practice room in Liverpool for an hour before tea.

On his thirteenth birthday his aunty had got him a guitar, “that’s sort of where it all started,” says Miles. His mother also introduced him to music from a young age, putting music on

regularly. The first band he joined was The Little Flames. Since, he has been in The Rascals, the Last Shadow Puppets, The Jaded Hearts Club and currently his solo career, collaborating with artists such as Lana Del Ray, Professor Green, Jamie T and many more.

There are a number of nostalgic feeling tracks on the album. The music video for *Nothings Ever Gonna Be Good Enough* featuring Corinne Bailey Rae, was inspired by childhood memories. The video shows a ‘younger version’ of Corinne and Miles at the beach and then pans back to their older versions, singing together. The beach where the video was filmed reminded Miles of the beach near Liverpool and gives a nostalgic feel-good vibe to the track.



▲ Miles Kane and his mother

Another track on the new album, *See Ya When I See Ya*, is Miles talking to his younger self. The lyrics read ‘You’re walking around, got your head in the clouds, acting like Mr Johnny know it all.’

“I’m letting someone else be that guy now. If I had to give my younger self advice I would say listen to your gut more as it is so important. There have been times where I have taken my eye off the ball and it was hard to not get distracted. When you’re young and make a bit of money and are surrounded by beautiful people, it is easy to get caught up in a certain lifestyle.

“I’m nowhere close to the top of the mountain. I constantly feel like I’m going up that long steep hill. I’ve lived the dream and now I want to focus on bettering myself and continue doing what I love.

“Coming into the new year my resolutions are to eat healthier. Drink less. Quit smoking. All those classics! Just continue growing as a person and being the best I can be, giving back and being grateful. Helping others and encouraging others younger than me musically, I want to keep growing as a person and being the best I can be.”



Photo credit: Lauren Luxenberg

MILES KANE

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▼ Miles Kane's Instagram icon



him to their studio when restrictions eased in early summer. For fun they recorded the song Tell Me What You're Feeling.

His album was completely finished at this point (or so he thought) as he had used the two years between touring to work on it. He had recorded them as high-end demos at the Hackney studio of producer Jamie Biles.

Both the vibe of the new song they recorded and energy that Dave and Oscar radiated made Miles rethink his *Change The Show* album.

"I wanted something looser, less polished and more live. The songs were there but it made me question the way they were recorded," says Miles. He decided to re-record the entire album in a couple of weeks in a less rehearsed way which they did in the no-frills studio.

"Dave and Oscar are a decade younger than me. The weird thing was I saw myself in them – their love of Scott Walker and Serge Gainsbourg, the tones they use, their style. We were recording these songs that I didn't realise were about me getting older while I felt like a kid again."

In lockdown Miles says he was sometimes glad of the quietness and stillness of it all, a chance to rest and reset. Yet, at other points it was the complete opposite. That said, he also completed Mario switch "It's really great you know. I recommend it," says Miles- some may say he hasn't really grown up at all!

"I'm so desperate to play gigs again I can't tell you enough."

One thing that hasn't changed with his new 'grown up' wisdom, is his love of performing. He hasn't been on the road properly since 2018 and will promote the new album with a huge UK and European tour- which has had to be postponed to April/ May due to the new Covid-19 variant. He will be performing in 30 cities.

Like others, a huge part of Miles' life was disturbed when the pandemic hit. "I can't remember my last gig before lockdown. I'm so desperate to play gigs again I can't tell you enough. They mean so much to me and a lot of mental stuff goes into them, whether big or small, I think of

each one as if it's my last- which it was for so long.

"The song I'm probably most looking forward to performing live from my new album is the title song *Change The Show*. It's a real anthem and I can't wait to get the crowd involved in it," says Kane. He isn't a very political person but the song came from him watching the news one morning, on the sofa in his underpants. He was angry with what he saw on the TV, with so much injustice going on in the world, it sparked a flame inside him and he captured that in the song.

Many of the songs from his new album were recorded during lockdown, infact, he thought he had finished the album until he got talking to his neighbours, the psych-rock duo *Sunglasses for Jaws*, David Bardon and Oscar Robertson who invited

Change The Show
Album cover



▲ Miles Kane performing at a festival