



Cover Star

Julius Cowdrey

Photography by Philip Panting & Louis Agace

Loved by the loyal viewers of *Made in Chelsea*, the 25-year-old Canterbury native is more than just a reality star. He's breaking through the charts as a singer songwriter with a tenacious yet humble attitude. He talks to Plamedie Poto-Poto about a future collaboration with Kygo, his five year aspiration, and his first experience gracing the catwalk at London Fashion Week.

If you're a Made in Chelsea fan or frequent viewer, then believe this: Julius Cowdrey is just as you would expect. Down to earth, genuine and cool. There is no façade, as opposed to other reality stars you might be deceived by on television.

His unique silk-like vocals stunned the viewers of Made in Chelsea when he first made an appearance on series 13 - serenading Tiffany Watson with his acoustic guitar at a summer party. His brave actions caused quite a stir amongst some as Tiffany was then dating fellow cast member Sam Thompson, and Julius was the new good looking boy on the scene.

"MiC was an incredible experience. I've met some interesting people. I went to five countries with the show, over the space of a year and a half.

It's interesting being on a television show - it's not something you do. One second you're just a nobody who can sing and suddenly you're this singer-songwriter who gets noticed on the streets -

it's a bit of a different world but yeah, I have enjoyed it."

He shares that he won't be returning for the 15th series as the only reason he joined the show was to gain exposure for his music.

Although he has attained something more out of it. "Asking Ella out was a pretty good memory. It might have been my best moment," He explains.

Julius and girlfriend Ella Wills (21) met in Mauritius. They have been as tight as two peas in a pod for over a year now and owe it to cast mate, Daisy Robbins who invited him on the holiday of a lifetime with some of the other cast such as; Harry Baron, Sam Prince, Frankie Gaff and Emily Blackwell.

Julius' passion for music started at a young age. He played piano for ten years before stopping. "I didn't enjoy being taught. I stopped for a while, which is awful because I could've been an Elton John" he reveals.

Not just a one trick pony, he is also singer songwriter and can play 'Wonderwall' by Oasis on the guitar.

His parents pushed him into lessons. "I guess when you're young, they've got to see if you're interested in doing things like that." He reflects on his gratitude towards their support.



I still get introduced as the guy who beat Ed Sheeran to number one

Julius' father, Chris Cowdrey is a former England cricket captain. While his mother Christel was a professional jazz singer. His twin brother, Fabian followed in their father's footsteps and played cricket professionally for Kent.

But, Julius explains that there isn't anything else that he really wants to do. "When I can touch people emotionally through music, it means a lot to me. "I write all from experience. So, when someone comes up to me after a gig and says: 'I love your song, etcetera' That's what drives me. It's the love of doing it."

His next revelation is shocking. He says that he's not working on an EP or album. Instead, his focus is towards his next single (Russian Roulette) and more releases after that.

Julius gives his own outlook on the future of music. "I'm under the impression that releasing an album isn't

really the way of the future in music - maybe I might be wrong and I might be making a huge mistake - but I don't think that people in this day and age have the mental stamina to listen to an album. I think it's a quick world we live in, at a quick pace. People want to hear a single. They don't really want to listen to the whole album like they used to." His intellectual judgement could be on to something. It's reported by The Guardian that streaming platforms such as Spotify and Apple music have seen a growth in music consumption, since the late 1990s. Although nothing can beat the memorabilia, more people are listening to music online compared to buying the physical products of vinyl, CDs and DVDs.

Julius' debut single, '7 Roads (I see you)' hit 1 million streams (and rising) on Spotify, as it also topped Ed Sheeran's 'Thinking out loud' track on the singer songwriter chart on iTunes. Over our smartphones, I could instantly picture his dismissive shrug from the low-key pitch of his voice. "It was a pretty amazing feeling. His big track was up there for three years. I still get introduced as the guy who beat Ed Sheeran to number one. But I remember looking at the Spotify charts (UK Top 40) and I saw 'Shape of you' was number one still - it was up there for two weeks running). It was getting 4.5 million streams at the time and I thought to myself 'I've got a long way to go.' He says.

— 13TH & 14TH JULY 2018 —

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His next single 'Russian roulette' is inspired by a past argument he had with Ella, which his producer encouraged him to write about. He mentions that not every relationship is perfect and he wants to capture that, as he believes that others too will be able to relate. "The song does have negative connotations in it but every relationship has arguments – right," Julius clarifies.

"I went to the studio and the producer went 'What do you want to write about?' I told him about what had happened and he said why not write about that."

One of his goals for this year is to "Do better gigs, improve as a writer, write for other people and work with more artists." He mentions that he'd love to be able to feature on a song with Kygo (Norwegian DJ, who has hits with Rita Ora and Selena Gomez). "Anything is possible." In five years, Julius wants to achieve a headline at London's O2 arena.

"I also wouldn't mind Madison Square Garden – how about that for a dream!" He laughs warmly. "It would be nice to hit the top 40 charts. My song hit 62 and I was a bit annoyed I like 'ugh go to the top 40' and everyone was saying 'Are you joking?' To hit 62 in the charts for a solo artist on a first single is just..." as he pauses, I can tell he's nodding off at the thought of him accomplishing his dreams.

Julius describes his music as "acoustic singer songwriter pop", with "a bit of soul in there."

When asked where he'd love to tour, he says: "If I had a world tour, I'd like to perform in Asia. In India. I reckon they would be nuts."

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Above: Julius and girlfriend, Ella Wills

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Above:
Julius makes his London Fashion Week debut walking for VIN + OMI at their AW18 show

With an accomplishment already in the bag, Julius walked in his first catwalk show at London Fashion Week (of February) for Vin + Omi. He strutted on the runway wearing a longline split kimono and a pair of loosely fitted abstract trousers, with the support of Ella cheering him on in the audience.

On his Instagram, he thanked the eco designers for the opportunity with the funny caption of "Still struggling to get the eyeshadow off."

When asked about his fashion icon, he laughs, saying it's "hard". "If I'm taking about people I know, I would say I like how cool and edgy Oliver Proudlock is." (Another MiC cast mate). Julius says that he doesn't follow big fashion icons. "I just make my own style up, I love colourful and weird shirts, black jeans and a pair of Chelsea boots. I guess I'm trying to create my own stamp."

While he's focusing more on his music career, he's found it tricky to engage with others in the business. "I've heard so many shocking stories and to be honest I've been let down by past managers. I think you need to make sure that you don't trust anyone in the music industry. It's surprised me how most people are just money focused and less about the artistry. For them it's quick money. Which is a huge shame because I didn't think it'd be like that."

You might assume because a reality star as well known as Julius is and a wealthy family, he would have a smooth sailing pursuing his dream but that hasn't been the case. With a change of managers and PR team, he's still trying to get a record deal and break through the charts through releasing new songs.

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QUICK CHAT

Parties

"Mahiki. I went to Embargoes a lot last year but the Box is cool".

Best gig

Kensington Roof Gardens. It which shut down. "It's gutting," Julius says.

Shops

Sandro, Zadig & Voltre, Duke's Boots - "I don't know if you've seen but I wear them all the time." All Saints, and Zara too. He assures that "Calvin Klein boxers are the way forward."

Eats

Boys n Berry. "Try their chickpea salad it is incredible" (he vocally drags out that last word, showing his appreciation for the food). It's amazing for a spot of lunch. I live near there that I just pop down for a coffee every day." Chotto Matte, the Japanese restaurant. "I love sushi."

Close friends in MiC

Oliver Locke and Fredrik Ferrier.

He's fond of

Georgia Toffolo. "I haven't seen her recently but because she's been busy (she was crowned queen of the jungle on I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out of Here in 2017, became a Sunday Times Style columnist and This Morning presenter) so I haven't spoken to her in a while.

I see a few of them around but everyone is so busy - they've got so much on."

Music icons

Dead or Alive. And Queen, they're "pretty incredible". Michael Jackson - "I remember seeing him when I was younger at his last ever performance at the Oz.

I love the emotive energy James Bay brings to his music, as well as Ed Sheeran's ability to stand and perform on his own is credible."



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