

SHUT YOUR PRETTY MOUTH

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WORDS: JESS KNIGHT

THE SYPM INTERVIEW

Natalia Kills

She's the Bradford-born, LA-based singer who's set to be the next global pop sensation. But Natalia Kills still doesn't believe in fairytales

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How did Will.i.am come to discover you when you moved to LA in 2008?

I'd been acting in England in BBC shows for years. I was in The Archers as a kid then All About Me playing an Indian kid even though I'm half black. I got bored of acting and wanted to write my own lines, rather than following others. I found it hard to act a character and be someone I'm not, I wanted my own identity. I needed to be creative and invent my own story. In 2008 I put some songs on MySpace and Perez Hilton found me and blogged about me and got 2 million plays! I then met Will.i.am and he signed me.

You're tipped to become the next big global power popstar - how do you cope with this expectation?

By ignoring it. I'm making music for myself, no one else. If others enjoy it, I'm glad but I'm just doing it to express myself. Music is the point, not what others think. I'm producing music and that's my focus.

You mention Depeche Mode and Kate Bush as your main influences. What's your favourite song from both?

Kate Bush - 'Hounds of Love'. There's something about the drums and the way she invites you into her fear in the song. Also, 'The Big Sky' - it's the type of thing I'd say to my mates crying on the couch when some dick stood me up. Look at the big picture, not what he's done. 'Running Up That Hill' has inspired one of my next songs on the album. With Depeche Mode it's more the message and feeling rather than the lyrics.

You incorporate a lot of domination and S&M in your videos - how did you get in touch

with your dark side?

I never thought of that. I'm more a powerful woman than a sexual one and I like the feeling of the power of a man (hope my mum doesn't read this!). I'm fascinated by power and the pleasure of attraction. My songs aren't S&M, they're more symbolic of talking to my future self.

We play your song 'Mirrors' at Shut Your Pretty Mouth. It sounds amazing. How did you write such a killer track with such huge people?

I'm really strict about my sound and not falling into that radio feeling. I didn't want it to sound like you were listening to the radio. Akon had listened to my music so he knew I wasn't flexible and I told him that. I have to stick to my sound. He was so polite and intelligent and he got me straight away. I have one sound and I want people to hear the first 30 seconds and know what I'm about. It's a branding and that's what I prefer. There's an overwhelming message of dance and drink in music right now and I want more than that. I hate rules, I want break them.

Part of your mantra reads 'Sex. Love. Control. Vanity.' If you could have 100% more sex, love, vanity or control in the next 12 months which would you choose? And it's got to be one or the other.

Sex. I'm always away from whoever my lover is at the time. I can't have more control in my life and I've got way too much vanity. Sex is just pleasure and everyone should get it.

Your next single 'Wonderland' (out August 15) and its accompanying video has a deeply subversive and disturbing take on fairy tales - do

you have a favourite fairy tale or are you disillusioned with all that?

When fairytales originated they were dark and had horrible endings to warn kids off trouble. Now we just sugar-coat it with fantasy bullshit. You're disillusioned as a kid but then you wake up and realise the witch is really

there and the wolves are closing in, only there's no prince to rescue you. They started grim and that's the way they should be.

What happens on tour, stays on tour...and you've toured with feisty Robyn and the very colourful Kelis - any funny or grimy details you care to share with us?

I'm not gonna tell you that, but I did recently elbow a guy in the face who wouldn't let me off a train. I had a gig and I wasn't gonna miss it.

You're originally from Bradford and Leeds but you also grew up in London. Are fish and chips better up north than in London?

Anything but London! Sorry but I'll even take Birmingham to get chips over London! They do fucking good curry though, I'll give London that.

The New single 'Wonderland' is out August 15. Debut album 'Perfectionist' out August 22. Catch Natalia supporting Ke\$ha in July and at The Hoxton Bar & Grill on July 13.

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