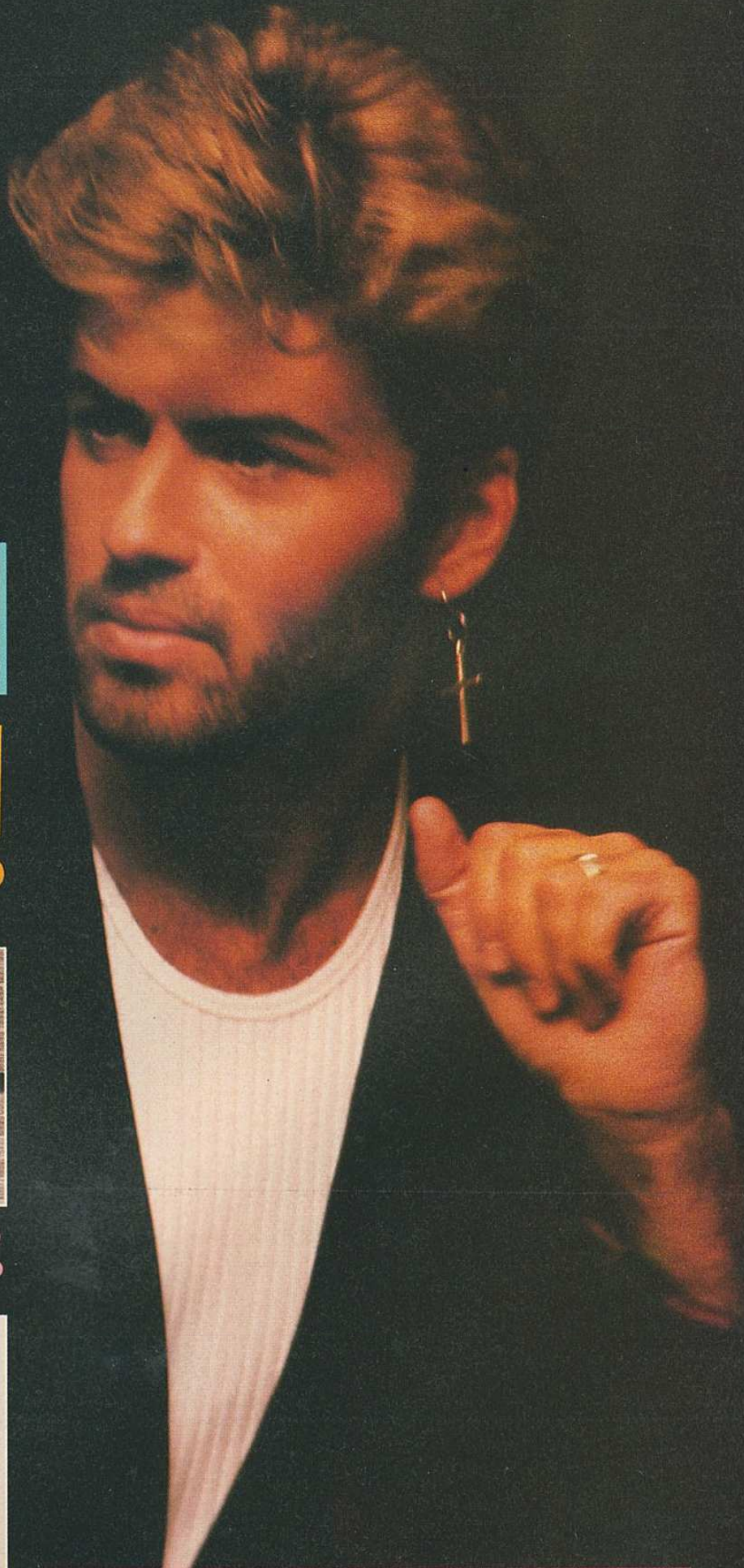


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NO.1

MR SEX!!

**George
Michael
interview**



**BOY GEORGE
IN BARBADOS**



**HOUSEMARTINS
G O M A D**



SHIRLIE AND PEPSI

PLUS	CAROL HITCHCOCK	JON MOSS	THE DAMNED
JODY WATLEY	THE BEASTIES LIVE	ACT	BRUCE WILLIS
PIN-UPS			
George Michael	Swing Out Sister	Whitney Houston	

Mr George "Sex" Michael explains to Paul Simper how he's changed over the past year, his first as a solo artist.

A NEW

MAN

Opening the door to his swanky gaff-for-a-day at Blake's Hotel (as per), George looks healthy and in good spirits. The morning's papers are already twittering about his 'raunchy sex movie' which accompanies the 'I Want Your Sex' single.

"I'm really pleased with it," he says, "even if it never gets shown. I've even taken a director's credit this time."

Must have been fun to direct. Starting with some squishy noises as a pair of susses and a bot strut away from the camera it's an atheletic affair involving George, his girlfriend Kathy, a bucket of water, some lipstick and a blindfold.

And so with one final cry of "c-c-c-c-c-c-c'mon!" it's time to start the interview. . .

The video looks like an advert for Sex. Like a milk ad. . .

It's very clean, very crisp. I didn't want it to be dark. I wanted it very up because if you take the wrong interpretation of the single it could be seen as quite aggressive. . . er. . . to me the 12-inch (which is the song in three parts-in-one) makes much more sense. It's divided into first the impatience, then trying to explain what you want and then finally resignation.

Is the line in Part 3 really 'get those big bad cockies out of your hand'?

Car keys! What does "big bad cockies" mean?! What's a *coquilles* in French? A scallop. "Get those big bad scallops out yer hand!"

I like that line but everybody says "big bad what?"

Who's the bulge on the front of the sleeve?

It's a photograph I spotted in a book. It's not taken from the video or anything. And it's not me in falsies! If it had been I'd have made sure they were bigger than that!

It's a girl's body. I liked it because it takes a while to work out what it is.

Do you think Fleet Street will try to turn you into a monster this time round?

I fully expect them to try. I've been waiting for it for ages. But whereas it would have personally violated me last year to have any lies written about me, now I don't feel that way. I've got a more philosophical attitude.

Will they go for the gay angle?

Probably. It's obviously the big seller — look at the way they've used it in the last six months. People aren't that concerned about drugs anymore unless you're actually dying.

As long as the people around me who I care about don't believe it I'm not worried. I honestly think the public must by now be starting to take 'exposés' with a pinch of salt.

If not I'll just have to recover from it. I'm sure it won't take long. I knew I was setting myself up by doing the single but you can't run your career in fear of the press. I refuse to.

How have you changed from last year?

Last year I had too much time on my hands after the concert. I kind of floundered around. I mean I had a good time, I really just let go for a while. But I started to lose sight of what I was best at, of how much I loved my career and how lucky I was to have it.

Then one morning I woke up and I'd snapped out of it. I don't know why. I just realised I'd been terribly self-indulgent, feeling sorry for myself, so I gave myself a kick up the arse. Ever since then I've felt great. Probably the best I've felt since the first success of Wham!

You spent a lot of time in America last year. What were you doing?

In America I was basically hanging around, clubbing a lot and getting too wrecked. Again I was having a good time — I was *definitely* having a good time. But when 'having a good time' becomes a pursuit as opposed to something that happens of its own



Pic: Pictorial Press

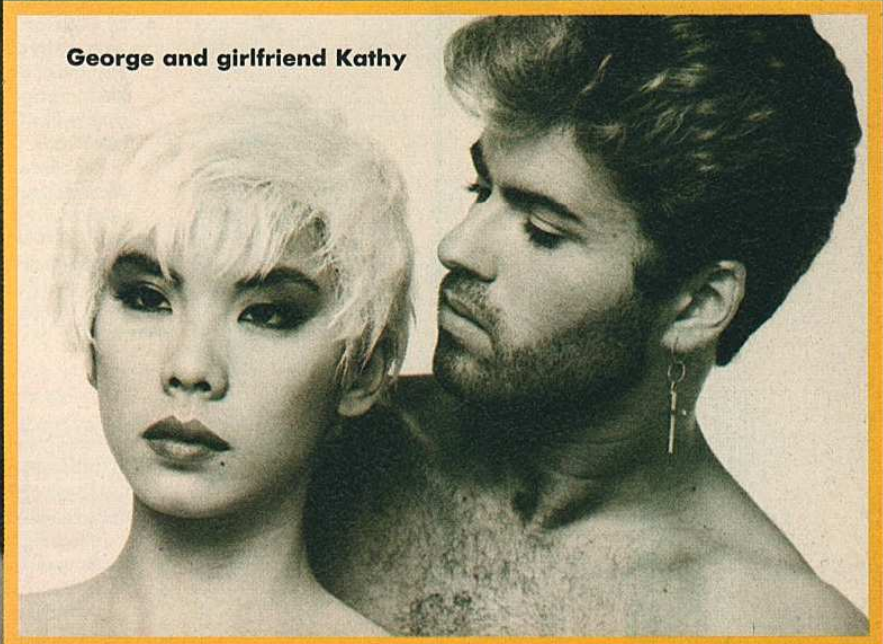
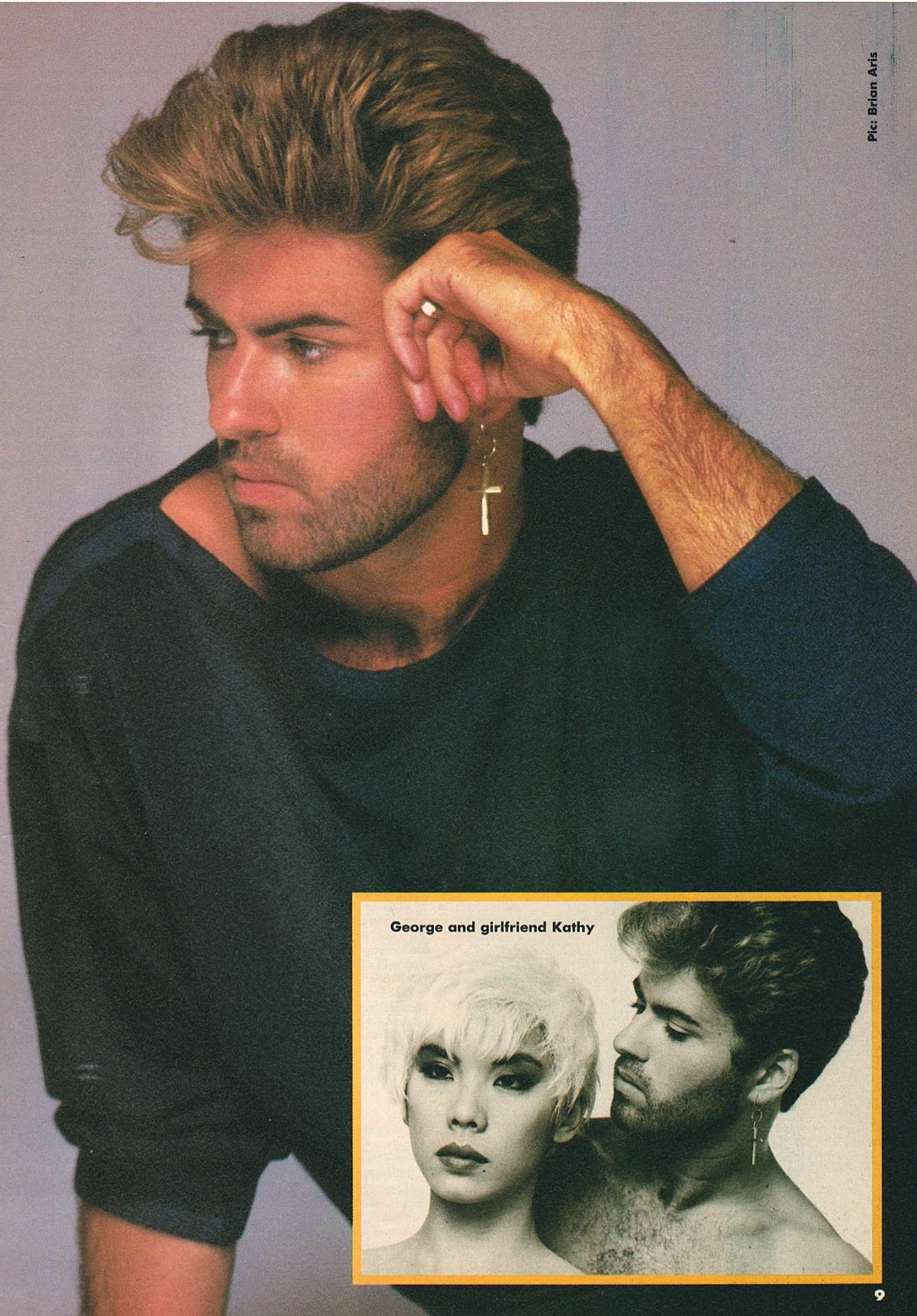


Pic: Griffin/LFI



Pic: Adebari/LFI

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accord... you wake up in the morning feeling grotty all the time, wondering what you're gonna do today. And it's just no good for you.

I *did* need the break – it helped like the break with the legal case before 'Go Go' – and it's worked. The album (probably called 'Kiss A Fool' after the opening ballad) is flying by.

I'm much more musical than I was last year. I was very lucky to get away with it to the extent I did.

Do you mean 'The Edge Of Heaven'?

That whole thing. 'Edge of Heaven' could, I think, have been a wonderful record if I'd been in a different frame of mind – I still think it's a very good record, especially the last minute – but it was all *forced*.

I had to make myself be that person, be half of Wham! To me Wham! had to make records that *sounded* like Wham! and it was a pressure.

What's your favourite song on the EP?

Probably 'Edge Of Heaven'. A lot of people imagine it'd be 'Battlestations' but I find that too forced. I was just wetting my feet with that sort of music. And I knew by then I wanted to do stuff like 'I Want Your Sex' and 'Hard Day' (The top notch funky B-side) with those two new songs I feel now I've finally gone all the way over to making records like the ones I've been dancing to.

You mention in the Wham! book a song 'Stephen' that you thought unsuitable for Wham!. Will that appear now?

I'd forgotten about that you know. Four or five months ago that was definitely planned to be on it. Now I think maybe not because there are already two

strong ballads on the album.

Also 'Stephen' is *incredibly* depressing, probably the most depressing thing I've ever written. It's about bereavement. I met somebody... you know there are some people that just never get over it. It's just so awful. The worst nightmare really.

Are you working with David Austin at all now?

I'm not working with David. 'I Want Your Sex' came out of work with David. It started as a song called 'Johnny Sex' – which was almost like a 'Go Go' – but then it changed by accident when we were programming in the studio.

I realised that it would be useless for David as a new artist as it would never get played on the radio. So I whipped it back off him! I mean he knows it would never have got played *and* that it suits my style of singing more. But I'm sure he'll feel that occasional twinge if it gets to Number One. I can see the headline "EVIL PAL GEORGE NICKED A NUMBER ONE OFF ME!".

I've worked with Deon (Estus, ex-Wham! bass player) as well and I'm really pleased with his stuff. I've produced one track, 'Heaven Help Me', and done a lot of backing vocals.

Have you heard any of Andrew's new stuff?

Yeah I've heard two tracks. It's really weird 'cos the two songs are so different. One's like a Sakamoto type thing – very Japanese – while the other he sings like... (George looks incredulous)... he sings like the guy from The Cult!

It's got a really catchy chorus. He's working on it in LA now. David's working with him a little bit but it's pretty much all Andrew. It's really heavy. He'll have to clean it up though 'cos it's filthy. *Really* filthy. It makes mine look like

'Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush'!

I think it'll be a smash in America but I think people are so negative about him over here that it'll be more difficult.

You seem very level-headed about what the public George can and can't do. Are you really?

I think every popstar I've ever met that's reached a certain level of success seems to be built on insecurities. My original ambition to become successful was definitely built on that.

Now it's switched to success on a more musical level. It's only recently though that I've realised there are things I can draw out of myself to overcome any mental or physical insecurities.

In other words I know, say, that I'm not as good-looking as half the best looking people in the club. But I can pull things out onscreen that can make it look otherwise.

As long as you can do that you can be secure in your abilities as a 'celebrity'. It's a question of realising that that ability is more valuable than just being good-looking.

Do you think the likes of Nick Kamen and Patsy Kensit have got it the wrong way round? They've been able to make records because they're good-looking.

That does seem to be the main virtue at the moment but to be honest I don't think Nick Kamen is going to prove himself in the long run. And Patsy Kensit's having a struggle.

You can feel a more immediate and more genuine excitement about Curiosity. Ben's not a classically good-looking guy but he's got a lot of charisma and style. So it's not necessarily the rule.

Wham! and Duran have spawned groups that are very visual but with less and less musical back-up. That's why record sales have declined. But it'll come round again. I just hope this cycle doesn't last too long.

Is there anyone else in the chart you rate?

Er... I can't say I've been very excited by 1987 or 1986 actually. I'm very worried by all the re-releases and all the time and money spent on groups the same age as the record company bosses, like Genesis. It's very incestuous.

People can say it's harmless but record companies and stations – particularly Radio One – are just wasting valuable time. A slot on *TOTP* can be incredibly valuable to a new band and if they're not getting it 'cos of some re-release then it's getting out of hand.

Would you prefer to be a Beastie Boy or Zodiac Mindwarp?

I'd rather not be either to tell you the truth! The Beastie Boys are having the last laugh at the moment. The Zodiac thing I think is quite entertaining.

I liked 'Fight For Your Right' because it was so abrasive. You could understand why parents would hate it so it's justified. What winds me up with the Beasties is that it's so easy to wind

up the press. You can get front pages by just sticking your fingers up.

It's so contrived. It just seems a shame that that's as imaginative as you need to be to outrage people these days. Still I hope they're making loads of money out of it. Good luck to 'em.

Would you say you were religious?

No. I think people ask that because of the cross in my ear. My mum objects to me wearing this cross. Whereas I used to consider myself agnostic bordering on atheist, I'm not now. My whole philosophy has changed so much over the past eight months. I believe much more now in genuine patterns of good and bad. I'm on my way to some kind of faith but I don't know what in.

You seem to rely very much on yourself which is a bit Buddhist, isn't it?

I think the Buddhist religion is the most constructive religion that I've ever come across. But I still don't feel I'm in need of a religion and I don't think Buddhism is something I'll ever be part of...

You won't be doing plays at the Hammersmith Odeon. A lot of George's friends are part of the Buddhist movement in London which recently put on a play called Alice).

No, I won't be playing the lead in *Alice*! But I've never seen Buddhism do anything but good. There are a lot of things I appreciate about my life now much more than I did.

One of the things that was wrong with my life over the last two years was that I was desperately craving some sort of normality. It was like I had a musical ability that was stronger than my personality. And I was getting carried away by it. So I wanted to feel some sort of normality, to feel that I was like everybody else.

It was really stupid – really dumb – because I was ignoring all the positive sides of what I do. I was also taking for granted the health of myself and all the people I love.

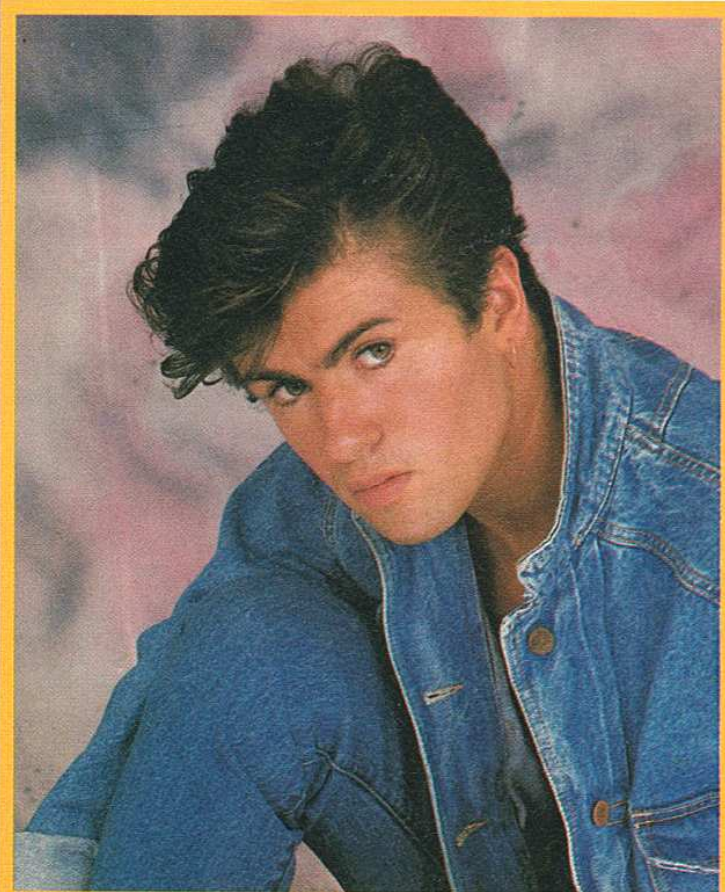
Then my sister Yoda was very ill... she fell on the ice in the middle of that really bad winter last year and had a brain haemorrhage. Basically what happened was for two weeks she was in absolute agony and it was horrible. There was absolutely nothing I could do and I remember thinking at the time I would give absolutely *everything* up just so long as she's OK. Then luckily she was. It turned out the pain wasn't actually from the haemorrhage but from a trapped nerve at the top of her spine.

That episode gave me a whole new perspective on things.

Are you more afraid of dying or of people you love dying?

Much more afraid of other people dying. I think most people are really. I'm not really afraid of dying. I have a strange feeling that I'm not going to live to a very old age. I've always had that.

I'm not afraid of age either. Jesus, I've done as much in my life already and had as much freedom as most people have in their whole lives. So why be afraid?



Pic: Scope