

Spotted



Paris Hilton (left) with her Spanish-Finnish model boyfriend River Viiperi on transit in Dubai

Airport, waiting for a first-class flight to Mumbai. British singer Mylene Klass in the lobby of the Jumeirah Zabeel Saray. **Retired English footballer Alan Shearer on an Emirates flight from Dubai to Sydney.**

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Hot seat

Al Jarreau

The 71-year-old singer is the only person in history to receive Grammys in three different genres. He chatted to *Rob Garratt* ahead of his Dubai debut this week



Where are you now?
I'm in LA – and you're in Dubai. That's such an amazing concept. It's hard for me to believe that there are people beyond 3,000 miles away in any direction without falling off the earth!

You suffered a health scare earlier this year, when you had to cancel some shows after being diagnosed with pneumonia. Did that make you realise there's still more you want to achieve?

Of course! There's still many dreams I want to realise. I just finished an album with the Metropolitan Orchestra in Holland – if we had been talking ten years ago, I would have said, 'I've never recorded with an orchestra or a big band,' so there's always more.

How have you maintained the respect of the jazz world while playing R&B and pop?

I'm not sure I've achieved that – what I do is in spite of them. Serious jazzers think I do too much pop and R&B.

'I don't want to follow Justin Bieber. Intimidated? I'm scared to death!'

Die-hard pop fans think I do too much jazz. I'm going to feel music I have a heart for doing, but I'm sure R&B fans have heard me doing Dave Brubeck and Chick Corea and then gone on to listen to them, and learn about jazz.

Would you like to tour with Chick?

That's a brilliant idea! Why didn't I think of that? I'm ashamed at myself for not having that idea. I'm standing in front of a mirror shaking a finger at myself.

Who intimidates you musically?

A lot of people. I don't want to follow Stevie Wonder – I don't want to follow Justin Bieber. Intimidated? I'm scared to death!

You appeared on *American Idol*. Do you think shows like that remove the struggle from music?

No, I don't. Any opportunity we have for singers to encourage them and make them hopeful is a wonderful thing. We've been rapping too long – there are two-and-a-half generations of kids that don't know anything about, or care to know anything about, a piano, a guitar, or singing a song.

How long do you plan to continue with your career?

I can't predict other than to say right now I feel strong, and I wouldn't be surprised if I'm able to go another 15 years, hopefully 20. [US jazz singer] Jon Hendricks is the greatest ever and he's 91 years old.

What do you remember from your gig at the Abu Dhabi Festival last year?

The fact they had a wonderful festival and invited musicians from all over the world, who went home with a new understanding of the emirates, and with a new understanding of how much we share with our brothers in Islam. That's my everlasting memory.

Al Jarreau plays at Jumeirah Beach Hotel on Friday December 7. www.timeouttickets.com

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