

Spotted



The Only Way is Essex stars Amy Childs and Mario Falcone partying with a crowd of devotees

at Blue Marlin. Macklemore choosing Movida in Dubai as a party destination following his gig in Abu Dhabi. **Bollywood film legend Sunny Deol being snapped by fans while on a shopping trip at Dubai Mall.**

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Hot seat Scouting for Girls

Ahead of their headline slot at Sandance, *Rob Garratt* chats scouting, critics and fast cars with exceedingly upbeat bassist Greg Churchouse, 35



What can we expect when you take to the stage in Dubai?

We're one of those bands who doesn't like to disappoint, so it's going to be all about the hits, and a couple of cheeky covers in there just to mix it up. **How cheeky?**

Well we've got a song called 'I Wish I Was James Bond' so we always like to throw in a cheeky Bond theme cover – it's going to be a little bit of rock 'n' roll, and that's all I'm going to say. **You're Greatest Hits came out last year. Did that make you feel old?**

Yes, yes it did. We're a little bit different in that most 'pop acts' get signed where they're really young – we were like 27 when we got our record deal, we're almost the older statesmen of pop now.

Well your music still sounds remarkably youthful, how do you stay so young?

I think it definitely helps being in a band where you don't have to do a proper job. We started

our first band in 1995 when we were at school, and still to be doing it now and to have success and to be able to do it professionally, has just been a dream come true.

And you're still described as the 'new boy'... because you met the others aged 11. True?

That is indeed true. [Singer] Roy [Stride] and [drummer] Pete [Ellard] met when they were five at cub scouts, and

'We're a Marmite band – you either love us or hate us'

then me and Roy met on the first day of senior school, when we were 11, and started our first band when we were 14. We've been doing this 20 years, it's very weird to think like that.

It sounds like a marriage. It is definitely like family.

So they were scouts, but you weren't?

No, I was actually an Air Cadet, I bucked the trend. But then I was a scout leader for a little bit with the boys, when we were in our twenties. That was interesting. The mouths on some of those scouts... I was shocked and appalled.

What did you buy with your first big pay cheque?

Some ridiculous cars.

Cars plural?

Well I only ever had one at a time because I only had one parking space.

What's the worst thing about being in a successful band?

There aren't any bad things about it. If we walk down the road we don't get people screaming and shouting. We have a lot of anonymity in our daily lives.

Come on, the critics aren't exactly kind.

No, that they aren't. It's quite weird when you have an album that's so very successful and you get lots of critical bashing in the press. It doesn't really bother you, because at the end of the day, when you look out from the stage and see so many very happy people with smiling faces having an awesome night out, it really washes over you.

One reviewer described you as 'Toploader meets McFly'. Do you consider that an insult?

Not at all – it's weird what some people like and dislike. It's all about personal taste. We're a Marmite band – you either love us or hate us.

When was the last time you went out scouting for girls?

A very long time ago, as we're all married with kids now. *Scouting for Girls* play Sandance on Friday May 9. www.timeouttickets.com.

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