

Spotted



Pop singer and *The X Factor UK* judge Nicole Scherzinger (left) partying at Cirque du Soir.

Notorious *TOWIE* bad boy Mark Wright joking around with friends at Boudoir, posing in front of a red Rolls-Royce with mates and later dancing up a storm with his dad at People by Crystal at Raffles.

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Hot seat Wiley

As the 33-year-old English rapper, MC and songwriter limbers up for dXb Festival, he tells *Rob Garratt* about Dizzee Rascal, 50 Cent, grime and stabbings



So, 'Heatwave', your first UK number one – how did it come about?

I was in the studio searching for a hit. My lawyer was ringing me, saying, 'Look Wiley, no one's going to touch you with a barge pole because you milked the scene for nine years. All you can do is use your own money to fund yourself.'

How are you getting on with Dizzee Rascal?

We've come back to a halt. We're not best friends, but we're not enemies. We were a conflict of interests because we were two similar artists on one record label, and he went first and I went next. I sometimes blame myself for following him.

So it should have been you?
I wasn't ready. When Dizzee became Dizzee he wasn't ready,

but he was the best on that day. I haven't had my best day, I've just carried on. And now if I concentrate I'll be having my day when people wrote me off years ago. Dizzee's not having his day today.

'You want to stay real, but you can't have everything'

We've also got 50 Cent coming over for Atelier/Live. Are you a fan?

He's cool, but his time is over. He'll never strike again – he's had a time and you can't have it forever. Everyone will think, 'You're just milking it'. I like him, but he's not on the radio.

So this is your day?

It is my day, because I've never had a day.

How long for?

I don't want it to last long. I just want to get in four singles, an album, millionaire, happy, royalties, smile, and then help other kids. And this time keep 50 percent.

You mean you're not a millionaire yet?

I have been. I've spent millions but that's neither here nor there. You need the millions in houses. You need a million that's not cash, and then you're a millionaire.

How do you feel about the 'godfather of grime' title?

I wouldn't turn it away: James Brown was the godfather. It's a good thing to be called. But sometimes I feel its like you're older, you schooled a scene, a youth club, and that's the part I hung onto. I think, 'Godfather? That's old.' King sounds better.

How do you feel looking back on the times you've been stabbed?

To have been stabbed 21 times is quite crazy – it's not something I'm happy about. But as a man I can stand up and say this happened, and I survived.

Your new music is pretty commercial. Do you miss doing the harder stuff?

Well, I do it anyway, day and night, but I just know it's not making any money. You want to do music that makes money, you want to stay real, you can't have everything, so you have to have a balance.

Wiley plays dXb Music Festival at Festival Park, Dubai Festival City on Friday October 3.
www.dxbfestival.ae

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