

Who Are You Wearing – Jonathan Ross

[Upbeat electronic music]

KIRI PRITCHARD-MCLEAN: Hello and welcome to Who Are You Wearing podcast, with me, Kiri Pritchard-McLean. My first guest is the iconic Jonathan Ross. Presenter, actor, comedian, and critic, Jonathan is such a geek for loads of things, and fashion is one of them. And I love this chat because I think his genuine enthusiasm for clothes and style and having fun with fashion just bubbles over in this conversation at every turn. So we recorded this in June 2021. Jonathan was in his office in London and I was inside my walk-in wardrobe, which is what I usually call a room too small to put a bed in that I keep my jumpers in. This conversation is a long one because we didn't want to cut anything out. So settle in with a brew and a biscuit as we ask Jonathan Ross, 'who are you wearing?'

[Music stops]

JONATHAN ROSS: I'm in the middle of six kids in my family. So I've got two older brothers, two younger brothers, and a younger sister right at the bottom. And I was sort of stuck in the middle. And I've become aware as an adult that my parents weren't particularly interested in me. I think it – partly where I am in the shuffled order of things, partly also just because they – I think their desire to have a big family was more of a kind of compulsion for them based on their unhappy experiences as children. And their desire to create something which they didn't have. And then of course, as is often the case, they created it but didn't really know what to do with it, you know? So – so I don't remember – I was never ever a priority of theirs. Um, and so in terms of clothes I often would have hand me downs from my brothers, which was

a bit of a shame because I was actually taller than them by the time I was about 12 or 13. So – but still my parents didn't think to shuffle the order they gave the clothes in. It still seemed like if you're the oldest you get the trousers first. So I would often have – I remember in particular being embarrassed by a pair of herringbone trousers I had to wear to school, which were at least two inches too short for me, uh, you know, and that was – in actual fact borderline traumatic, you know?

But we were a poor family. I mean I remember as a kid going to school with, you know, literally holes in my shoes and putting cardboard in the bottom to sort of like you know, because otherwise it was – you would be touching concrete as you walked to school, especially in the winter. And there would be damp, you know? So we were a poor family. So clothes in a way were – it was a necessity but it was also very much I saw it as a status symbol. If you could have new clothes, you know, you just had – if you just had clothes without holes in, or clothes which were bought for you, not given to you once your brothers are finished with them, that seemed to me – that was kind of what I was shooting for, which isn't the highest bar to have set yourself, of course, and I'm pleased to say I achieved it.

So in a way it's great that it wasn't set that much higher. Um, so clothes were – it was a kind of a – it was an emotional side to clothing which wasn't – which I wasn't particularly comfortable with, um, but I remember watching TV and loving seeing like – I loved seeing like the Beatles. And I loved seeing the way Elvis Presley dressed. And I think I often responded to the kind of exterior before anything else, you know? So I liked the Beatles for their clothes before I even realised they made music as well, you know? I liked Elvis because I liked these weird capes he wore, you know? I loved Evil Knievel, the stunt man, because he had a little

cape. I mean I, you know, I – I've had a few capes over the years for that reason. I've still got a couple in my – you don't wear them out much because they're a bit of a nuisance, you know? But, um, and you forget them. They're easy to forget in restaurants and taxis.

[Kiri laughs]

JONATHAN: 'My cape!' Um, and they're hardly necessary, you know what I mean? It's not like it's a really – never really useful. It's – it's quite an adornment. Um, so I remember just liking the way people looked and – and I – I was always into comic books. So I always liked superheroes' clothes. I liked the colour, the mash of colours, and the design and that. And I still think if people dressed as superheroes the world would be a happier place. There was one episode of 'Big Brother' years ago where they all had to wear superhero clothes for a day or two. And I remember watching thinking, 'everyone seems so much happier.' It's like when the sun shines.

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: If everyone's wearing their pants on the outside and a cape, everyone's in a good mood.

KIRI: Did you have a strong sense of style yourself as a kid, then? Were you trying to make these hand me downs work or was it just so far removed? The choice was so far removed from you?

JONATHAN: Well up until the age I was about a young adult, it was – I had no choice, you know? You – you wore what you were given. So I didn't have any sense of style. And I, uh, but I – and I felt self-conscious and embarrassed about the way I looked and

the way I dressed, you know? And I – and I didn't really – there was no way to avoid that, really, you know? Um, but then when I got to about 15/16 and I – and I always had a variety of like jobs as a kid, you know? Because I wanted to earn money because we didn't get any pocket money. I remember there was no spare money in my house. So I would have jobs initially to buy comics, so I had money to buy comics. Um, and then I started looking into clothes and I wanted to buy clothes and – but I didn't really know, you know, no one had ever taken me under their wing, you know what I mean? I didn't really have anyone I could talk to about 'where do you buy this?' or 'where do you get that?'

And I was somewhat isolated and introverted anyway. So I didn't even ask my brothers 'where do you get stuff from?' And so we were – in a way it was weird because we were a close family in terms of geography, but we weren't a close family in terms of sort of like emotional needs or sharing. Um, so I didn't really know.

And I remember seeing trousers and not even knowing where to get them. And I didn't have any friends at school who were in step with me, but I'd see stuff in a catalogue and I'd say, 'oh, they've got – I really want some pointed shoes,' you know? And try and get stuff that way. And – and I remember saying, uh, Woolworths at the time, they started doing straight jeans and I really wanted some straight jeans because I was always wearing flared. And they had these really cheap ones that I remember were a pound a pair. Seeing that back then, that was extraordinary. And I bought them but essentially they were made out of something which was somewhere between cloth and cardboard. They were – it's – it's like – it was like it was sort of woven paper. And they're really cheap and you could wear them once and they looked fine, but the next time you put them on the knees were shot right out. And there was very little you could do with them. So I learned early,

you know, to sort of like maybe spend a little bit more than a pound on a pair of trousers. But – but luckily for me, and I was very fortunate, is that when I was just – just after I turned 16, that's when punk really happened and hit the mainstream. I can remember sitting at, uh, home and I watched the Bill Grundy show with the Sex Pistols on. It was like someone had set a bomb off in the room. And I went, 'wow.'

And the great thing about that was the clothes that you wore, partly you made yourself. So you would buy clothes from a junk shop or a jumbo sale and you would cut it up and attach pins or chains or studs or paint it, turn it inside out. And so it was great. So suddenly I had access to feeling like I belonged to something. And feeling like I had clothes that I wanted to wear. But they didn't cost money that I didn't have and no one would give me to spend on clothes. And – and also I think important for me was kind of the need to attract some sort of attention or to evoke some sort of response with clothing, which I – I still don't fully know why that is, but I think I still have it.

KIRI: That's so interesting. Because then your – your clothes that you're making as well, like that's such a pure form of expression and telling the world who you are. Or at least who you want them to see you as as well.

JONATHAN: Yeah. It's – because before that I used to have fantasies about clothing. I used to see – like I'd see a 'Bond' movie. And my – most of my fantasies involved me being on my own, you know? Even as a child my sexual fantasies involved, 'wouldn't it be great to have a place where I can be on my own to masturbate without one of my brothers coming in?' which is a weird fantasy to have. Not a fantasy of being with someone or to actually have proper sex, which I would've been thinking about

while masturbating. No, it was just to have – just to have the privacy to do it in. And I remember fantasising about clothes. I used to fantasise about having a dinner suit and being able to walk in a restaurant in Casablanca and everyone look round and say, ‘who is that wondrous man?’ But that was as far as the fantasy went. I didn’t even sit down and have dinner, Kiri. I didn’t know how to eat in a restaurant. I didn’t meet anyone. I didn’t get out to do any adventure. I just wanted to be seen to be wearing a nice suit and that was enough for me. And then the punk clothes, of course it was great fun because it was much more in that – it was a kind of an – with a small ‘p,’ political kind of gesture and it was also provocative and it was fun. So I remember – and I – and sometimes you’d get in trouble. I remember I had a great – I bought a school blazer that I turned inside out and painted ‘white riot’ on the back, which was a Clash song. I had a – and the reason why I turned it inside out is, if you – back then you used to get sometimes beaten up or attacked or chased by people wearing punk clothing, in the early days of it.

So you could run down an alleyway and turn it the right way around and walk out and people would think it was a normal blazer. But I had a white butcher’s jacket I bought from a catering store for about 2 pounds, which I splashed with red paint and I wrote ‘psycho killer’ on the back because that was blood, and I bought some dolls heads from a local craft shop, dolls faces, and pinned them on, and then burned the eyes out with cigarettes. And then I was surprised – then I was surprised when people shouted at me in the street.

KIRI: It’s such a good look.

JONATHAN: But I love that. My psycho killer jacket was great.

KIRI: It's amazing. I'm amazed that you didn't go into designing clothes with that kind of eye and that kind of joy.

JONATHAN: But you know, the problem is, Kiri, and this is – and in a way it's – it's – but because no one showed any interest in me. And the school I went to was a very, you know, lower – the classrooms were like 35 kids in a class, you know? The teachers basically – it was a machine that you went through. And it was all perfectly nice. I'm not – it's not a sob story here at all, but no one ever talked to me about potential or doing what you – no one ever had it. My parents either. No one had a – ever had a conversation about 'what do you want to do? What do you like doing? Where do you want to be?' You know? I didn't – all I knew was what I'd observed, and when we used to walk to school, I mean it was a long walk to school. The kids around the corner went to the same school. Their dad would sometimes walk part of the way to school with us because he was going to the underground, which we used to go under. He'd get his train and we'd go under out the other side and carry on walking for another two or three miles to the school. And he, um, he was a really sweet old man.

But I remember looking at him and thinking he was like a – a living cautionary tale to me. Because I knew he didn't enjoy his job. And I knew he went in everyday because he had to support his family. And I remember it was really awful. I remember as a kid walking one day with him and I was polite, you know, we didn't want to walk with him but we did. He was an old guy. His name was Mr. [bleep]. And it was his last day at work. He said, 'it's my last day at work today.' And we turned and we went, 'oh, that's good. That's – is it good? Is it exciting?' And he came out that night and they'd given him a tiny, cheap watch. We saw it on him the next day. I remember thinking, 'fuck me, I'm not going – that's not going to

be my life. I'm not going to go everyday – an office where' – and you could sense he was a really sweet man but he was sort of a joke, you know what I mean? He had a sort of Edwardian moustache – and I imagine perhaps – perhaps I'm – but I imagine that he didn't fit in at the office. I imagine that he was a bit of a joke. And it's like – it just seemed so awful. And I remember that time – do you remember the series 'The Good Life,' the TV series with Tom –

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: That was starting on TV. And I remember seeing an advert in the paper saying, 'this show tells you how to escape the rat race.' And I remember thinking, 'fuck, yes, this is what I need.' And I literally – I sat down with like a pad and paper thinking – and then when it started, imagine my disappointment. 'Oh, you need a –' He's still working and you have to have a house. This is not what I was looking for. I just didn't want to walk to school everyday and then go and end up going on the train with Mr. [bleep] to work at a job that I didn't want for 50 years and then get thrown away at the end of it.

So I had no idea that you could do that. What I really wanted to be as a kid was to be a comic book artist. I loved the idea of drawing and trying to be an artist, and – but once again that wasn't really encouraged. And so my mum once said to me something, she said, 'oh, you know you guys can do anything you want. You should –' There was a guy she'd seen that, um, oh, uh, who's the director of 'Buggsy Malone'? Alan Parker. And she said, 'he came from a similar background to us, you know?' It's like 'you could do that.' And I remember thinking, 'oh, I've got to try and write a film like "Buggsy Malone" now.' So I started trying to write a science fiction film with kids in space, which went – well

you don't have to copy anyone, but that was like the only conversation I ever had with her or anyone about potential of doing something. Um, and at school once again, you know, the clear, you know, they said, 'what do you want to do?' And you say, 'oh, I want to be a pilot.' 'You can't, your eyesight is too bad. What else do you want to do?' 'Oh, I don't know.' 'Well the bread factory's hiring.' It's like that's what it was, you know? Which is fine. It was, you know, but I – I had the wherewithal to go to university.

And back in the day of course, you know, because I was smart. Back in the day you could get a grant. So my parents wouldn't have been able to afford to send me and I wouldn't have been able to afford to go. But of course you could go, so it was a great – it was a – a marvellous way out of a certain path in life that was otherwise pretty destined for you. If you had, you know, scraped enough grades to get in somewhere.

[Electronic music]

KIRI: I normally ask people who dresses them, and they'll, you know, who dressed you when you were growing up and it'll normally be like, 'oh, it's a cousin or my – or my mum or I dressed myself.' But with you I feel like you're being dressed by pop culture. You're just taking in everything around you and comics and punk and music and bits on telly.

JONATHAN: To an extent, yeah. I mean it's like if I see something now, you know, I'll try and find a version of it. I mean I've bought loads of women's clothes over the years just because men's clothes don't – aren't as adventurous, you know? I remember buying a pair of – I was delighted when I was at one of my

slimmer stages and I – there was a shop that we used to go – we used to go on holiday to Florida with the kids a lot. And there was a shop that had these purple flared trousers with a kind of big buckle belt. And I remember thinking I really liked them because they looked like the sort of trousers that the men in Hannah Barbara cartoons like Scooby Doo would wear.

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: You know those kind of flares that never had a crease in them? And I – at last I found a pair. And I really enjoyed those trousers. They were quite – and they wouldn't fit me anymore, but they were – they were cheap and they were stylish. Um, so yeah. I – I do that. I mean but certainly, you know, I remember one outfit that my mum did make for us, which was – which was very fondly remembered. I mean I won't be able to find it but somewhere there is a picture that exists of it. She – there was a phase when I was growing up. And this would've been late 60s.

For people to wear embroidery on jeans and stuff like that. And my mum, uh, embroidered the word 'wombles' down one leg of all of her kids' jeans. So we all had a pair of jeans with the word 'wombles' down it. Which looking back seems an odd choice.

However at the time I remember being very proud of my wombles jeans, you know? It's like – and I was only about seven or eight or nine then, so it wouldn't have been an issue. But I can't imagine my brother who was 12 was particularly proud, you know? Just about to become a teen and 'wombles' was down – rather charmingly and fairly – fairly kind of, uh, sort of like, you know, rustic. I would say, uh, she wasn't an accomplished embroiderer. Um, but it was down – each letter was in a different colour thread

as well. So – so we really – it really popped. Uh, but that was the only – only outfit. And I – but I remember – of course I said I grew up in the 70s and it was delightful summers – and my parents, who were very working class, you know, really trying to make ends meet and were in that way that, you know, very keen on self-improvement in a way that a lot of working class people were. And so even though my dad left school at 13 and I think my mum about the same age, he was quite well-read, you know? He'd taken a lot of time to read when he was young. He really wanted to better himself. And – and he worked in kind of like, you know, very, you know, he worked as a driver, he worked as a boiler man somewhere else, he delivered – he was always trying to get ahead and – and there was a period there where he had an accident and he couldn't work.

And then they – they stumbled on this thing where they found out that if you bought stuff from a catalogue and you sent it back, the catalogue couldn't resell it. So if you went to these places you could buy all this stock really cheap. And normally sell it for profit. So they set a small shop up when I was about 13 or 14 and it – and in a way I look back and think it's sort of – it's delightful, it's also sort of slightly tragic as well because it was in Leyton High Road, where my Mum wanted it to be a bit like Biba, I think. Which of course I didn't know about Biba at the time, and then – because she went with – she painted with my dad. They painted it 'Anything Goes', is what they called it.

And they painted it like a 1920s lettering above this shop in this fucking dirty part of Leyton High Road. I mean it was – it was, oh, Lea Bridge Road it was actually, just off Leyton High Road. And, um, so for a while, for about the first year, there was good quality stuff coming in. and we would be dressed from that. So there was a – a brief period, about a year and a half, where the clothes were

quite nice. And I remember I had a pair of orange loons that I adored. So they were orange flared loons with about a 24-inch flare at the bottom. That's pretty big. Oh man, I loved those trousers. They were great. And it was quite a thick denim as well, but a bright orange denim. God knows how they dyed it. Uh, and then – but after that first year, then I think too many people were buying from this source and so the stuff that we got in the shop was terrible and wouldn't sell, so they wound up losing money on this shop. But for a brief period, it was quite, you know, it was quite, um, we were quite – it was quite euphoric. We had access to clothes and toys as well. They'd got some as well, which we weren't meant to have because they were reselling them. But occasionally we'd play with something before it went in the shop.

KIRI: Amazing. What a golden period for you. I also just love the image of six of you with these 'womble' jeans like the Von Trapps. It's so cute.

JONATHAN: We were proud of those jeans. And you know, looking on back, sort of my mum, she's dead now, she died three years ago. Looking back, it's such a lovely memory. Knowing that she – she always wanted us to be sort of happy, you know? Um, and for her to sit and do that, it's a lot of work to do six fucking pairs, you know? 'wombles'.

KIRI: It really is.

JONATHAN: Big letters. Just choose something with smaller – a smaller word next time, you know? It's too many letters to do.

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: I wouldn't have done 'wombles.' I would've thought, 'uh, wombles is too many.' I'd do something smaller. I mean it could've been worse. It could've been 'thunderbirds.' But it was 'wombles.' Um, but it – it's – it was – it was interesting. Because I wonder if for her it was a kind of way of showing her love, you know? In a – to everyone else. Like 'these are my children and look, I've done this for them,' you know? Because she was always the one who kind of went the extra mile. My dad was fine but he was – a, exhausted, b, working, and c, increasingly unhappy. And I think he would've left but he always felt like he should stay out of responsibility to the children. So, you know, it was a weird thing where he was sort of trapped or had trapped himself in this relationship. So when someone's increasingly unhappy, they haven't got love to give you, you know, but I think my mum still really wanted to make the most of it all for us, and perhaps wasn't aware that he was, uh, as unhappy as he was. And so I think she – she kind of lived through us quite a lot anyway, you know? And so maybe when she was embroidering those 'wombles' trousers for us she was doing it for herself. I don't know, maybe she – maybe she had a secret pair she wore around the house when we weren't there.

KIRI: I love it. It's, uh, I know you had those herringbone trousers, but were you every made to wear anything that you just hated?

JONATHAN: One thing. From the years when they had that shop, uh, and as I said shoes were an issue. Now the problem with shoes was this: because I was the tallest member of the family, I also had the biggest feet. So they couldn't par me off with the hand me downs after the age of about 11. So they had to get me separate shoes, which was always a source of some annoyance for them. And they had a pair of shoes that came into their shop which didn't sell. And they didn't sell for obvious reasons, which is

they were a bright orange and mustard training shoe. Enormous, of course. Bright orange but with a kind of horrible kind of almost like the colour of bandages, the sole. Then curved up the front of the toe area. They – it looked a bit like I was wearing – it was like skis that had been crossed with cheesy Wotsit's, right? They were fucking disgraceful. And I wore those for – and I was so self-conscious. And I so – I hated them with a violent passion. But it was the one pair of shoes I had for about seven months, eight months of my life. And they were the only bad thing, you know? But having said that, you know, I don't remember that side. So I remember some of the clothes we had that I loved. I remember getting a pair of – shortly after that I remember getting a pair of platform shoes. And this was back in the day when, you know, shoes actually weren't that expensive if you bought them from a cheap shoe shop. Because they had a plastic sole. They were plastic shoes basically, you know? They can't have been more – but I remember the stacks were about that big.

There must've been about a five each stack on those, on the front. And I wore them, I had a pair of, um, Oxford bags that were in fashion briefly. Very very wide flare trousers all the way down with a large turn-up, and there's now this trigger warning – a sad story. It's about the [mumbles] because I adored those trousers. And I liked those shoes. I wore those shoes so much, the – the sole wore down and you could see the structure of the platform inside. And it had a kind of waffle build going all the way up.

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: Yeah. But I was running for the bus once. I even remember the bus. It was 262, to bring me home from my friend's house in Stratford back down to Leytonstone. And as I ran, unfortunately due to the combination of the large trousers, the

wide trousers, the high and deep turn up, and the large heel on the stack, somehow the stack of my shoe got caught in the turn up of my trousers. I went flying through the air, and here's the tragic part, ripped the trousers. Ripped the trousers on the knee. Which they were sewn up by my mother, not with the word 'womble', you'll be pleased to know, just a straightforward job. But you always knew, you know what I mean? They weren't – the integrity of the item had been destroyed. Uh, so I was very sad about that. I took more care with running for the bus in the future. But it's a very 70s accident. That couldn't have happened – that couldn't have happened in any other decade, someone's stacks get caught in the turn up of their Oxford bags.

KIRI: Did you have an outfit then, as either a kid or a teenager, that you just wanted to wear everyday? You never wanted to take off?

JONATHAN: I've had a few outfits like that as an adult. Not really as a teenager. Um, I mean I liked the punk clothes I wore, you know? But once again I never felt I really quote got it right because still at that stage I was wearing glasses and so I always looked a bit shit, I thought. You know? And I didn't realise you could without glasses, but I couldn't. I mean I'm a minus nine in each eye so I can't make out someone's features past about seven or eight inches from my face. So I would've – I would've been walking under a bus or something. But, um, I've always liked things that, um, you know, like jackets with padded shoulders. I like things that give you a more distinct silhouette and shape, you know? I've always liked that kind of thing. Um, but not as a kid particularly I don't think. But I – the weird thing is I wasn't that aware of clothes until I was about 14, 15. I think I knew – I knew I liked clothes and I liked colours, but I didn't really care what I wore. I mean I lived quite an internal life, really, you know, until I

got into my teenage years. And then I became aware of the outside and then I wanted those sort of clothes. So I suppose I – I remember loving a big shirt with a big coat I had back then, you know? And I had a mac then as well. I didn't have a jacket but I had an overcoat that I would wear with it. Fucking weird look, you know? And then these glasses. These National Health glasses I had, which were like not the small ones. The only – the only ones they offered you as starters were like big pear drop ones, sort of a bit like Hank Marvin, you know? Like a – a 14 year old Hank Marvin who tried to pretend to be a private detective in a mac.

KIRI: [laughs] I love it. I absolutely love it. Because the era you were a teenager in, like you said, is – there's so many huge moments happening in fashion that we're still emulating and still coming round now. So which ones did you – did you go in for them all? Were you experimenting? Or were you like, 'oh, no, punk. That's my one'?

JONATHAN: Well punk really was my one because before that I was too young. I mean I was like – when Roxy Music happened and Bowie was happening, I was aware of it and I liked it but I was sort of scared of it. You know I was scared by Bowie because Bowie looked like an alien to me and I was like 13, 14 when he was doing Ziggy Stardust. So, you know, and I was this weird bespectacled boy who basically lived in a world of comic book fantasies. And then I saw this beginning and I'm thinking – and I liked the sounds they made, but their images were too adult and too confusing, you know? I didn't know what they were doing, really. Um, but then I was 16 when punk happened, or just about to turn – I mean I was born in 1960, so really punk for me happened between – I mean – for real early adopters it was from like late 75, but by Easter 77 it was over in my opinion. So I really enjoyed it from like October 76 to Easter 77. That was punk. It

was really only a brief period, but that was the period when I saw my first gig and it was all tied up in all those things. And got my first kiss with a girl in an underground station on the way back from an Ultravox New Years Eve gig. She had her mouth full of chips that she hadn't finished chewing at the time. So it was a kind of bittersweet experience, quite literally because there was salt and vinegar in her mouth. But it was, um, it was an amazing period, you know? That six month period when I sort of came of age in a way. Um, and so those clothes were amazing. But after that, once again it was still a lot of fun because that rolled into the Mod revival. The two – two-tone clothing of like – and the ska revival. The New Romantics came along. I remember my first passport picture, I'm wearing my shirt collar turned up, I've got my hair dyed in sort of frosted tips at the end, and I'm wearing a diamante broach.

KIRI: Love it.

JONATHAN: Yeah. Early Duany type style.

KIRI: That's so glamorous, I absolutely love it. Well did you – did you have a rebellious phase as a teenager then? And was it showing up in your clothes?

JONATHAN: Not really. I mean the thing is my parents really weren't that involved in my life, so I didn't rebel against them. Because there was, you know, was like where – they didn't even know where I was most days. Uh, school I didn't mind going to school. I missed – that period when punk happened I didn't go to school that much, so I had to re-take – so I failed all my exams that year and so I had to re-take them, but I did re-take them and passed them all fairly easily. And then I went on so I was kind of a year behind when I got to university, uh, but no, I never really had a rebellious phase because I never really felt like anyone was

telling me what to do, you know? So it's like I never had – I never had anything much to rebel against, you know? It was all just – just, you know, doing what – I – like most people I kind of didn't think I was particularly attractive. And I think all young people feel that way, apart from the ones that are genuinely, you know, unavoidably, um, objectively gorgeous. But everyone else, I think we all feel – and then we look back and think, 'oh fuck me, I was much better looking than I thought, you know?' Um, although there were pictures of me at that time where you can see where I really wasn't very nice looking, you know? Um, so it was – so I suppose I felt that way. I wish I looked better. And we all dream of looking more like David Bowie or more like this rock star. But, um, no, I didn't really have a rebellious phase, particularly. But the fact that I was right there in the middle of punk when it happened, in a way you were rebelling even if you didn't know what you were rebelling against. It felt like a – as I said, with a small 'p', a political gesture. And you did feel like you were part of something cool. But I was more interested in trying to be cool than rebelling, you know?

KIRI: Oh, interesting.

JONATHAN: I – I desperately wanted to be cool. And never really felt it.

KIRI: Oh, that's so fascinating. So, you know, you making your butcher's coat with 'psycho killer' on it and the dolls' faces, that's you being like, 'this is the coolest I can look.' It's not like a 'f you' to society.

JONATHAN: Yeah. No, no. It's like, 'I think this is a good look. This is exciting. This is a good way to look.' And there was something about punk which made you feel slightly heroic, because you did

feel like you were going out and confronting things in a way. It was like, you know, I'm doing something deliberately different to the rest of you, you know? And it was provocative in that I think other people felt like you were sort of judging them. Even though you weren't necessarily. So it was like I'm saying your life is boring, look at this life I'm leading and so people would or – or obviously 'psycho killer' is a sort of a – sort of a – an aggressive thing to put on your jacket, even though the Talking Heads song, which I didn't even understand at the time and now I know isn't really in praise of psycho killers, um, but you know, it was just a – a great phrase, I thought, you know? And I loved – I mean – and because I was sort of arty, I remember doing stuff on other people's jackets. I thought it was a favour. I painted the Adam Ant's logo on someone else's leather jacket. And I did a – I had – I used to make stencils and spray them on t-shirts. So I did – I copied the Generation X 45 logo and I did – I cut out a stencil I made of Gay Advert, she was the bass player in the Adverts. I sprayed that onto t-shirts and that looked pretty good.

KIRI: Wow, really creative.

JONATHAN: But I used to use car spray paint, so it was a very weird thing on a t-shirt. It was quite – because see I didn't know how else to do it. And once again I didn't know who to ask, so we bought this cheap spray paint and then it was really thick and smelt bad on the – my friend at the time, the – the only other punk in Leytonstone, a guy called Steve, when he wanted to dye his hair – once again we didn't think you could go and get it done, so we sprayed his hair with car spray paint to change its colour. And he had – he was a particularly violent ginger, his hair colour. And we sprayed it paint and it looked awful. It was sort of claggy and so it was really – really wasn't a smart thing to do.

KIRI: Oh, bless him. He would've gone viral now. He'd be on BuzzFeed if this was happening today.

JONATHAN: God, yeah yeah yeah. Like that woman who used the glue on her hair instead of –

KIRI: Yeah.

[Electronic music]

KIRI: So when I think about your – your style that you have now, your current style, when did that start manifesting? Because I think you have a really clear sense of style. But it's always evolving, I think.

JONATHAN: Well I think – interestingly, I think, the reason why I first started dressing the way I did was when I – well, coming out of that post-punk period, there was, uh, there was a number of shops I loved. There was a shop called Rockature in Kensington Market and then there was Johnson's in the King's Road and in Kensington Market where you could buy different variations on classic men's suits. So they went with a – a slim 50s sort of looking suit, and then they – there was more rock and roll kind of suits, but they also did – there was a brief period where the zoot suit made a comeback as well, which was great. I was thinking of having one of them made recently. I bought a pattern for it recently, but they're so – they're so extreme. I don't think they'd be particularly wearable. Um, and so I like suits. And the reason why I like suits as well is because I – I sort of struggled with making an outfit that works, I mean I would sort of wear stuff and it never quite went together properly. But the great thing about a suit is it's acceptable but you don't have to make any choices in a way, you know? It's like because the trousers and the jacket go

together, and you put a shirt on with it. That's it, you know? So by way of wearing a suit it takes you – in a way you're opting out of making choices. Um, but then when I wearing suits on TV, it was very much a choice. Because youth TV presenters and younger people on TV didn't wear suits. And the reason why I wanted to wear a suit when I first started hosting my first talk show was so I was not seen as a youth TV show.

KIRI: Okay.

JONATHAN: I didn't want it to be seen like it was like a kind of, 'hey, wow, so what we're doing now, we're looking at some new music just in.' I wanted it to feel like a mainstream show but with a – but subvert the mainstream. So I went with suits that were – I – which I wouldn't have been able to afford previously. And this was another reason why I went with the suits, because I knew that there was a budget for clothes on the show and I thought, 'fuck, I can buy some clothes and I'm not even paying for them.' So I bought a – the first Gaultier suit. And I bought some suits from a Spanish designer called Adolfo Domínguez, which also had a very strange – very wide shoulder but un-structured so it flopped down. So it gave you a really weird – which I liked that look. It was very broad but ugh, sort of went down, like you melted. Bit sort of like a Dali clock, you know? You melted at the sides. Um, and I loved the Gaultier that period, and I bought a couple Armani suits in that period. And – and menswear kind of came into its own a bit. Because with the birth of those style magazines – like ID had gone into the bigger format and Blitz came out. Face of course was the first one. And style became much more of a talking point. Previously it was there, but it wasn't identified. And the Face magazine very cleverly kind of identified that style was as important a part of music in some ways as the music itself, you know, and the rock scene. So it was a

– I think everyone was growing slightly more aware of it all. And so you could – there were many more shops you could go to. And so I liked having the option of wearing suits, which sort of made you feel like you were sort of part of mainstream society, but twisting the suit slightly so it would have a design twist or a little bit in it so it's slightly different. Um, and – and it was seen as somewhat radical. I remember there was a thing in the Times a year after I'd been in saying that I had helped the British suit industry because young men were wearing suits again. And I was really proud of that piece even though I don't know whether it's entirely true, but I know like milliners up – you know, in different parts of the country were saying 'we've got more of a demand for these fabrics now because more young men are wearing suits. And in part it's because this guy is wearing suits on TV.' You know, so it was, uh...

KIRI: That's amazing.

JONATHAN: Yeah. It was a – it was a fun period, that.

KIRI: It's – it seems to me like you are fluent in fashion and pop culture. And then I just – it's so smart to me to understand the medium of, 'oh, talk show hosts, if you want to be an adult you wear suits,' but then to – to take those rules and subvert it in your own way. And, you know, just take these things and subverting it to – to tell a story for you. So, you know, these suits that are just slightly left of centre, you're hinting at something else, telling a story of your butcher's jacket, you're using fashion to tell something about you. I think that's – are you conscious of doing that?

JONATHAN: I think I'm conscious of doing it now, but I don't think I was conscious of doing it then particularly. I mean it was a

means to an end. It was like, 'oh, I want this show to be successful, but I also – I don't want it to be judged as something which is as ephemeral or as easily dismissed as a youth TV show. I want it to be seen as' – because you can't subvert something unless you're in it, you know what I mean? And so like we wanted to play around with the ideas of a talk show back then and make it a comedy talk show and a parody of a talk show and also a celebration of a talk show. It was very odd, you know, we were – so we were trying to do partly what Letterman did but partly what older shows had done in the 50s. And, um, I – I needed to be seen as a kind of host – and I was lucky that I was the age I was, because I was 26 when that show started so I was old enough not to be a kid's presenter, but I wasn't an older presenter, you know? There was no one else of my age with their own show like that on TV back then.

Now it's slightly more common, but back then it really wasn't. Um, so I think I perhaps subconsciously knew I was doing that. Now, you know, now I know. And now people expect me to look kind of odd, you know? And so I – but I suppose – I don't know when it was. There have been various times when I haven't cared enough to push back on clothes I'm given for shows, you know? Like I was doing a talk show – when you do a lot of talk shows, it's 'wear this suit.' And I always liked it if I could have a suit that was just slightly better made. So I loved when I wore a lot of Vivienne Westwood when I was at the BBC and Gaultier was still making menswear then. Now there are no really interesting designers in menswear. There's a – there's a guy called Woo Young Mi, a Korean designer, who I quite like his stuff. And there's a guy called, um, uh, it's called something philosopher, it's like Takoshoti – it's a Japanese designer. But he's got these extraordinarily expensive – and I think Yohji might still make menswear, but they've gone into sort of sports menswear more.

Comme des Garcons doesn't really do it, you know? There's not much out there which is interesting now I find. And I don't like the modern cut suit, you know? The new suit for men, which is this weird kind of really boxy jacket with really narrow or unstructured shoulders and with your tiny bum jacket, ugh, and it doesn't fit my shape of body anyway, you know, I'm an older man. I'm 60 now. So it's like I'm not – physically your body gets thicker. So you can't wear those clothes. And so I find myself loving vintage clothing but also wanting to emulate that. So I'm making more stuff myself. And I've still got a lot of old punk gear. I mean you can't really see it here, but in the office I am here, this is my office in Camden, and round the corner there at the entrance hall, on the wall I've got framed loads of, um, uh, original Sex Pistols clothing, including the shirt – the t-shirt that, uh, Paul, uh, sorry, Steve Jones was wearing when they signed to EMI. And here, like I've got some stuff here, which I'm going to frame and put up as well. These are some – when Malcolm McLaren split with Vivienne – these are some trousers McLaren made with his own label. With like weird Perspex and his fingerprint on the back.

KIRI: Amazing.

JONATHAN: They're tiny, they wouldn't fit me. But I'm going to – I don't know where I'm going to display this. And this is one – this is a t-shirt he made at the same time. The original Cash from Chaos cap-sleeved t-shirt. Um, and here's another one from him from that period. So he was doing the slogan thing before Katherine Hammett came along and did it. 'Be reasonable, demand the impossible.'

KIRI: So good.

JONATHAN: And this is one of the original Sex Pistols shirts from that period.

KIRI: Oh my gosh, the shirt.

JONATHAN: Yeah, yeah. With the kind of like the – the rings, the d-rings outside and the seams on the outside. Really kind of radical. And the longer arms so it's like a kind of straightjacket that can be fixed onto something. Isn't it beautiful?

KIRI: It's stunning. Where'd you get this stuff from?

JONATHAN: Nowadays auctions. I used to buy it off people who'd had it since the day, you know? The stuff I've got out there – I've got the classic black parachute jacket that I used to wear out. I wore when I went to see the Pistols when they reformed in like, uh, 2000 something. 2005 or something like that. When they came over. But now it's all framed up there. But I've got loads of stuff at home that – I mean I've got a set of – now – now my wardrobe at home – I sorted it out the other day and I've got rid of almost all my modern stuff. And it's like there's a Gaultier section, Thierry Mugler section, Vivienne Westwood section, Kansai Yamamoto section, oddball section, Japanese weird section. That's it, you know?

KIRI: Love it. Oh my god, I love it.

JONATHAN: So I've got it all laid out for me to, you know, know where it is.

KIRI: Oh, that's so good. Do you think of hair and makeup as part of the outfit?

JONATHAN: I've never really done makeup and I kind of wish I had back in the day, but I think it would be weird to try it now because I'm not comfortable – I was speaking to Boy George a few weeks ago, he was on my show, and I love Boy George. And I love what he did. He was talking about how he hadn't saved – I said, 'did you save any of your clothes? Because you know now people go crazy.' He said, 'I saved a few,' he said, 'but the weird thing that I didn't take any of,' he said, 'and someone asked me the other day and they said they'd love to – they would either display it or what – was make-up boxes.'

He said, 'and of course I had these make-up boxes,' he said, 'and I realise now that they're,' he said – he said it was all just really cheap shit in there. And all the brushes were filthy and dirty and – but he looked amazing and he still does, of course. Uh, and I never went that route. I didn't – partly I think though because I wanted to look more like a man. I wanted to look masculine in a traditional sense. So I didn't want to look like Bowie in that way. I wanted to look like Brian Ferry or I wanted to look like James Dean or Marlon Brando. I wanted to look like a 50s style thing or, uh, and I went through a vague psychedelia phase where I wanted to look like someone from the late 60s. There used to be a shop near here called Velvet something that sold jackets and shirts that looked like they were psychedelia, which is a shame that that stuff doesn't seem to exist anymore. There isn't little pockets of retro fashion where people will go and say, 'I'm going to be this for a while.' Um, but so I never really did make-up at all. Hair, yes, I think hair is, you know, I could see that and I – I often – the thing is I'm kind of – it's weird because I really like looking some way but I'm actually – I'm not particularly vain or narcissistic, you know? So I actually in some way I don't care how I look. In some way I only really dress to amuse myself, you know? And – and if the hair is close enough to what I want it to be, that's fine, you

know? I don't really like people fussing over it. So at the moment I quite like the way it's cut because I can just stick it back and get it up there and I'm very lucky that, you know, I'm this age and I've still got it all.

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: And I don't dye it yet either, which is amazing. Although it does make me fucking mad because everyone thinks I do. And they said and it's like, 'I don't.' And if I did I'd admit it, you know? But it's more annoying that I don't and everyone thinks I do. And then when I say I don't, they think, 'well of course you'd say that.' It's like, 'well why would I fucking lie?' You know? So I'm thinking of dyeing it grey just to shut everyone up. Um, but I've never really dyed my hair. I dyed my hair once when Bowie came back with the 'Let's Dance' period and I went to see him at Milton Keynes and I thought I'd try and look like Bowie.

I wanted to dye my hair blonde. And I did it at home but I bought some bleach from the chemist and I didn't leave it in long enough. I didn't know. And so it was sort of ginger. So I looked more like Tintin when I went to see him. Then I thought I'd look like him but I didn't. But I quite liked it. I quite liked that ginger hair. It was quite good. It was quite a bright orange.

KIRI: As long as it looks like it's deliberate, I think that's fine.

JONATHAN: Yeah.

KIRI: If you go for a strong orange.

JONATHAN: I don't even mind a bad mistake, you know what I mean? It's like, you know, and like it's very interesting. Because I'll

tell you what I was thinking recently. I was – I was reading – because I've immersed myself – I'm kind of – even though I don't think it's particularly healthy, but occasionally I wallow in nostalgia for that period. And I've got a load of stuff here in my office. Next time you're in London you're welcome to come over because I've got clothes here but I've got books, records, some vintage 1970s pornography, which, by the way, I mainly bought – and I know this sounds untrue, but I bought for the articles. Because in one of them, it's a magazine called 'Mayfair', which was sort of upmarket, and it's soft core. But there's a – a fashion spread and they have these amazing fashion spreads. And in one of them the knitwear is being modelled by Michael Winner. What – whose idea was that? Michael Winner modelling knitwear. And he looked terrible even back then as a young man. And, um, I remember reading an interview recently from that period with Robert Smith from The Cure. And I love The Cure. The Cure are an amazing band. And what's brilliant is his self-awareness. Because – and he's a very gentle sort of man. And someone said, you know, 'do you get tired of people mocking the way you look or talking about the way you look in a slightly degrading – he said, 'well,' he said, 'yeah, it doesn't really bother me that much because normally it's journalists. And normally when they say it I look at them and think, 'well, you don't look that great.'

That's amazing. Because that's actually the way of looking at it. It's not like, 'what you're saying is actually true,' it's like, 'well hold on, who's saying this? Well I absolutely don't want to look like you, so your opinion therefore is completely un – of no interest whatsoever to me. Because if that's the best you can do, you can fuck off, you know?' And he looked amazing. I mean I wouldn't want to look like that. I wouldn't – that's not a style for me, but that whole goth period, that early goth period was amazing. You look at how incredible Siouxsie Sioux looked and

Robert Smith looked in that period. They were like – you know, and so unique and even now Siouxsie’s remarkable looking, you know? When she makes the effort she goes out with those sort of Pam Hogg jumpsuit she wears at the moment and the eye makeup and the hair still sort of like somewhat backcombed into – into submission. Just they look incredible.

KIRI: Yeah, absolutely. Just really – because I love that it’s sort of like – you know because when people think of goths it’s counterculture and a rejection of things. But also there’s so much work that goes into that. It’s quite glamorous, the makeup and the hair.

JONATHAN: I hadn’t realised until recently, think how much fucking work went into getting that hair up every time you go out. But it’s a great thing. If you just – you know, uh, there’s the Irish talk show host, Gay Byrne, years ago, I think he sadly might not be with us anymore. But he was a – kind of – he was like their – he was their Wogan. Even though in a way Wogan was their Wogan as well I suppose. But Gay Byrne, there’s a great clip you can find online and so this is Dublin in about 78 or 79 and he does a thing on youth culture on his show. And so he has a punk, a goth, a New Romantic, and a mod on the show. And what’s brilliant is they – people are so much more media-savvy now. They sort of know what’s expected of them. But there’s – there’s a kind of honesty, an unfiltered honesty about it. And so the mod guy, he says to him, he says, uh, it’s an amazing clip, you should find it online. He says something like, ‘now why do you like scooters? You like scooters, don’t you? Why do you like scooters?’ He went, ‘well, they’re cheaper than cars.’ He goes, ‘oh, how much are – why do you like – why do you like Vespas instead of Lambretta’s?’ ‘Well, you can’t buy a Lambretta in Ireland. We don’t import them.’ It’s that really matter of fact way. And he speaks to this goth guy and

the goth guy's fucking hilarious. He's really witty, he – I think he's gay, young gay Irish guy but really fucking witty. And he says to him, 'why do you do your hair like that?' And he says, 'well I don't do it like it everyday, Gay, I don't – I don't do this for breakfast. I did this because I knew I was – I do this because I was – I was coming on the show tonight and I thought you might like something a bit more exciting.' It's really – it's so amazing. You realise there's a certain wit and there's a certain kind of like, um, the confidence needed to carry that off, but also the kind of self-awareness and the sense of humour to deal with that sort of stuff.

And that's why – that's why, going back to Boy George, he was always such a great character. Because he – he developed that kind of armour of personality to protect him from the bullshit that came up from like, you know, mainstream people who just wanted to say 'you're wrong' for no reason really, I suppose, other than they were threatened, perhaps, or felt a little bit sad that they didn't have the courage to do it. But the wit that he had and the wit that you find in that and the kind of sense of humour and the courage is just – just really – it's kind of inspiring, I think, you know? More so when you look back. Because now in a way anything goes. And that's why I find it all more depressing that people don't – I know this is so predictable but, you know, I look at young people and I think, 'I wish you made a bit more effort,' you know?

Because everyone seems to go along the same sort of routes, you know? You look at the kids on the gram, they're all – they're sort of like all looking like a certain pop star or a certain rapper but it's really fucking mundane, you know? There doesn't seem to be anything – I crave a certain level of silliness or a certain level of individuality and you don't see that so much. And when – even when you see someone like Lil Nas [X] or someone like that and

you think, 'well, you're not actually doing anything new now, really though.' You know what I mean? It's like I want to see – and I'm – maybe there isn't anything new, you know? But all this kind of just looking back to the – the 70s or the 80s isn't the same as in the 70s or 80s, again that was the first time we saw people doing goth.

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: And it was amazing. It was amazing. So I don't know what – maybe there is something that I just don't know, but I'm sure there probably is.

KIRI: I think the innovation that I see in youth culture is like Harajuku cosplay stuff, which is really creative and, you know, often gender nonconforming and there's wigs and there's masks. And they put – they make a lot of their own stuff and, you know, will create their own characters and things.

JONATHAN: Yeah, I – I see a few people out like that. But then when I see that, I think, 'okay, well cosplay seems to be like cosplay, it seems like dressing up. It doesn't feel like fashion, it feels like dressing up for a reason.' And when I see the people who are like more extreme like there's a couple of young London, you know, really kind of gender-fluid people, one's got a bald head and wears a lot of makeup, I can't remember it – their name, uh, but I look at that and think, 'well, that's what George was doing in 78.' You know what I mean? It's like – and maybe there's just, you know, it's what – it's what Leigh Bowery was doing. And Lee, who I was lucky enough to meet, was extraordinary. Fucking hell, where did that come from? Just amazing imagination and courage. But maybe because they pushed it that far maybe there

is nowhere to go, unless you go into like body modification, and I don't really fancy that to be honest with you.

KIRI: Are there any trends that you've repeatedly tried to pull off that aren't happening for you?

JONATHAN: I think most things I've tried to pull off hasn't really happened for me, to be honest with you. I mean I'm always aware – I'm always a little disappointed in myself that I never quite look the way I think it's going to look. There's only been three or four times in my life where I've ever thought, 'actually, you know what? You look pretty good.' Most of the time I just think, 'ugh, it's nearly,' you know? I'm sort of like nearly there. But there was a period that I loved looking. There's a series I did and you can find clips online, called 'Mondo Rosso', which was a kind of b-movie, appreciation of cult movies show I did in studio based on BBC2, and I was wearing these – Johnson's down at King's Road, I went back to there and he started doing these crushed velvet suits in really bright colours. And because I was – I was really kind of slim back then and they fitted really well. I think I looked amazing, right? And that was the only time I really felt like I nailed it consistently for a short period. I – I was really pleased with the way I looked. I mean I was in the Face magazine back then. I've got it here in the office here somewhere. Do you want me run and get it and show it to you?

KIRI: Yes please.

JONATHAN: Okay.

KIRI: Absolutely.

JONATHAN: Hang on, I – it won't – it won't take too long. I know roughly where it is. Hold on.

[Kiri laughs]

[Electronic music]

JONATHAN: No, I couldn't find it. I – you can find – I'll find it online and I'll send it to you. But I just found this also. This is an old issue of 'Hello' magazine that I was in with Jane. But look, that was – we were both very stylish back then.

KIRI: Oh my god, gorgeous.

JONATHAN: That's – that thing that Jane's wearing, that was an orange 70s suit we bought from a thrift store in – in, uh, Florida when we were on holiday, we just found it. And that shirt I'm wearing, I'm trying to remember who that was. It might be – it might have been Johnson's, but look. I'll look – see in that picture there? I'm wearing –

KIRI: You look gorgeous.

JONATHAN: I'm wearing quite cool cowboy boots and tight jeans and –

KIRI: I love it.

JONATHAN: Jane – and look at Jane. And Jane's suit is like a leopard – leather – leopard print. So I think that was from when we had – and look at her there. I remember that clothing – there used to be a women's clothes store which was quite cheap called Morgan's.

KIRI: Oh, yeah yeah yeah.

JONATHAN: And then – yeah. And I remember buying her that from Morgan's. And the kids have got little John Galliano leather jackets on.

KIRI: Oh my god.

JONATHAN: That was when we only had two. So that's – that's my oldest daughter. She's 30 this year. And that's my son. He's 25. He lives around the corner. He's working – this was the house we used to be in. And we look – look how glamorous we are there, fuck me. But we didn't realise it.

KIRI: Wow. You're stunning. What a fit family. It's –

JONATHAN: And there's Jane with her pet salamander.

KIRI: Oh my god, she's such an icon. What a woman.

JONATHAN: She – she used to have two. She used to have two salamanders called Mulder and Scully. They've gone now. They're sadly dead.

KIRI: Do you encourage each other with the – with style? Because you both seem to have the same sense of joy and a great eye as well.

JONATHAN: Well not – I mean Jane's struggling a bit at the moment because she's going through the menopause and it's like clothes wise she's finding, you know, it's tricky. And I think she just feels quite, you know, miserable. So, um, I try and encourage her. I mean I'll buy her stuff but it's a minefield buying stuff for

your partner. If it doesn't fit, it's like, ugh. Because what you don't want is you don't want them to be sad.

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: Um, but certainly I've never ever – I always think she looks great, you know? And she's got great style. And – and she always – she's got better style than I have. I've just got more clothes.

[Both laugh]

KIRI: It's just a numbers game.

JONATHAN: Yeah. The thing is she knows what she wants to wear and how she wants to look. I don't. So for me it is a bit like dressing up, you know? It's like, 'oh, I'll try that, oh, what' – I mean look, I'm going to get you something else. I actually bought these for myself. I haven't worn them. So I'll buy it – if I see something and it catches my eye, I'll go, 'oh, I'll get that,' and I don't really think through why. Or what am I doing with it. But –

KIRI: Oh my gosh. They are stunning.

JONATHAN: I bought those – they're from the – it's a women's side, Dollskill I think.

KIRI: Yes, I've got some of their shoes.

JONATHAN: Yeah.

KIRI: They are so good. Are they in your size?

JONATHAN: My size. I saw they had them in a 12. I assume they make them for drag queens, I'm not sure. And I thought, 'oh, I haven't got any platforms anymore. I'll buy these.' And I – and I haven't worn them yet. I will wear them at some stage, but it's like, what do I wear them with? So I'll have to get – I think I'll have to get some more flares made, obviously. Uh, and I'm thinking – I don't know what colour I would pick yet. I mean what would be ideal would be a kind of gold – and I know you'd approve – a suit made out of that.

KIRI: Oh, yes please.

JONATHAN: But that would be good. So – so maybe. Maybe you'll see me in these one day. But they're great, aren't they?

KIRI: Yeah, they're so –

JONATHAN: I bought them because they're really – they were in the sale and I thought, 'oh, you know what? Treat yourself.'

KIRI: They're gorgeous. They are gorgeous. We're going to have to get a picture of those so we can put it on the Instagram so people can see.

JONATHAN: Yeah. Yeah.

KIRI: Um, well I wanted – because I know you're a big fan of vintage, what's the oldest item of clothing you've got in terms of firstly just oldest in its age, and secondly that you've had the longest that you've held onto?

JONATHAN: Okay, oldest in its age, I recently bought a 1930s motorcycle leather overcoat, which is like – and the leather they

used back then, it's like fucking industrial thickness, you know? It's like so – you put it on and like you're 'woah.' But you realise it had to serve a job, you know? It was going to get – and that's an amazing thing. I've only worn it out once, uh, it was when Jane and I went to, um, just before lockdown there was – there used to be this festival of lights over near West London. You could go to this park and they set all these lights up. It's like a Chinese festival but it was done there and it was amazing. So I wore it out there. Trouble is I – I got exhausted carrying the coat around. I mean I bought – I bought another really heavy coat a while ago from, um, is it called DSquared or something? And it's – it's like a multilayered coat. It's got a big outside bit and an inside bit. And it's so thick when you put it on. I used to have a little Morgan sports car and I sat in it and I couldn't barely move the steering wheel because there was so much coat. And I wore it out once and I literally – I had to stop and have a rest because I was so tired from carrying this coat. But it looked amazing. It looks amazing. I've still got it. Um, another night I wore it out, I went out with a friend of ours to a restaurant when we were living in Belfast for a while. And it was freezing and he stupidly hadn't brought a coat. And I said, 'there's one in – this comes into two.' So I took the top layer wore that and I gave him the middle layer. So it's quite practical, you know what I'm saying? The item of clothing I've had the longest would probably be – I've got a lot of clothing that I bought in the late 80s, uh, when I was doing TV shows. And I still wear. I mean I've got a pair of shoes I bought from Shelly's. They were really lovely black and white shoes that I – that looked not dissimilar to the ones I'm wearing today, but they're rounder toe with a buckle, that I wore various times when filming in America. I remember wearing them when I was sitting on a roof interviewing Johnny Depp once and he said, 'oh, those shoes are great. I've got to get a pair of them.' And I went, 'Shelly's. £29. Get yourself down there.' Um, so I've still got those. But I've got a lot of – of

the Gaultier stuff in particular. And I'm very pleased I saved that. I wish I'd saved more of the Mugler I used to wear, but the Gaultier, um, I've still got most of the suits from that period. And most of them don't fit me because I would've been a 52 back then. I'm a 54 now. But I – I should be able to get down to a 52 again, so I'll try and get down to a 52 again this summer so I'll get it all out of storage and wear it all again. Because it's amazing. Like bright green. And I've got – let me show you this picture as well. Hold on a second. This is hanging on the wall out here. This is me and Jane back in the day. But we're wearing matching Jean Paul Gaultier suits that we bought.

KIRI: Oh my god, you look gorgeous.

JONATHAN: Yeah, and so – and I – I don't know about Jane's one, but I know I've still got that suit in storage. And it's a black and white pinstripe.

KIRI: You both look so gorgeous.

JONATHAN: Thank you. Very nice.

KIRI: Like absolute movie stars. You're so good looking. What a good looking couple.

JONATHAN: Yeah, but I don't think – I don't think – I think she knew she was good looking. I certainly didn't know I was good looking. I suppose I was, but it's weird. You look at it and it's like – it's not even like you're looking at yourself anymore.

KIRI: Really? You look like models. You look like, you know, those like model couples.

JONATHAN: Well we certainly didn't feel like it. But you know what, it just goes to show as well because, uh, it's when you have a nice photograph taken, you realise there were times when if you took a photograph from the wrong angle, of either of us, we looked terrible, you know? As everyone does. And that's the – that's the interesting thing as you get older, you realise that many of these people who you saw as style icons, who you wanted to look like, they only looked like that when they'd been styled and when they had makeup on and when they were shot from the right angle with the right lighting, you know? And for us to try and emulate that on a day-to-day thing is, of course, absurd. Which is why I think, you know, it's – it's quite nice to try and dress the way you want to dress and – and be, uh, be gentle with yourself. Don't expect to look – every time you look in the mirror, don't expect to see those cheekbones flashing back at you, you know? It's like just – but it is weird, because when you are – when you are in better shape generally, when you have taken a bit more care of yourself, you do look better. Of course you do. And clothes look better on you, you know? So like when I've been going to the gym a few times – and I'm not talking about being slim or fat, I'm talking about just being a bit more defined, you know? Having – having some solidity to your body as opposed to the marshmallowy shape that I've, uh, acquired at the moment after a couple of lockdowns. Um, clothes do hang off you better, you know?

KIRI: Yeah. Also I find if I just exercise a couple of times a week, my confidence or like my – whatever the endorphins do –

JONATHAN: Yeah.

KIRI: I feel like I am –

JONATHAN: You feel better.

KIRI: You know, I feel like I – yeah.

KIRI: And – and it's nothing. My body hasn't changed, but how I feel in my body does change by exercise.

JONATHAN: Yeah. Well I think – I think it sort of does as well. I think your posture changes a bit, you know? Like when you exercise more you're – you're sitting up more and you're like – you're just giving out a bit more energy. And it is – it does – it is picked up on. But we all look great.

KIRI: We all look great. Um, is there any, uh, era that you wish you existed in just for the fashion? I mean I feel like you've had the best one with the 70s, but...

JONATHAN: Okay, I'm going to name drop for you now. I had a delightful evening with Catherine Deneuve years ago. And I said to her, 'do you know what?' I said, 'it's amazing the – the periods you've lived through,' I said. 'If you could choose a decade to be in, where would you – where would you have been, you know? Where would you most like to be?' She went, '60s London. 70s New York. Late 70s London, maybe Italy. But no decade LA.' And you realise, you know, we are lucky of course because like those periods, you know, we did live through. I did live through. And London in the 70s, what an amazing time and place to be there, you know? And I would've liked to have visited New York back then. I didn't. I didn't go to New York until the 80s, but I'd loved to have gone to New York when it was really fucked and when it was like bankrupt and when punk was beginning to happen then because all the – and I caught the tail end of that. It was the – s going down to Alphabet City when it was really scary and not –

not being able to go in the parks at night. It was a certain joy to that. But, uh, if you're talking about a style, if you're talking about a style, a period that I really – I mean, for me I would go back – it's probably – I mean I love that period from about England, London, from about 74 to about 78. When you've got glam rock, but you've got – for me punk was the style I had and it was so – what was delightful was it was so accessible, you know? The fact that really you did want the clothes, like I just showed you, from Seditious, Sex, or Boy, you'd loved to have gone to those shops. But it didn't matter. You weren't judged for that. As long as you – if you hacked your hair back and you cut the sleeves off something and you put a couple of studs on it, and maybe you put a tie on with a t-shirt and splashed a bit of paint on your jeans, you'd look great. And you know what? That's still a great look, you know?

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: The other thing though, Kiri, is like you looked great. You know why you looked great? You looked great because you were young.

KIRI: Yeah. That's true.

JONATHAN: That's why you looked great. If right now I cut the sleeves off this shirt and fashioned these trousers into shorts and spiked up my hair, I would just look like I was having a breakdown.

KIRI: He's lost it.

JONATHAN: You know? So it's like put – but when you're 17 you can fucking – literally we were wearing bin bags, literally, and they looked great.

KIRI: So the era you want to exist in, uh, for the style is being young.

JONATHAN: Basically any – any era you’ve got, I don’t care, but I’d like to be 18 again please. Thank you. But no, you know, I’m not someone who looks back on that. I’m perfectly happy with where I am in my life and who I am and what I’ve done and, you know, I just try not to be an asshole on a day to day basis. That’s the only key thing, really. That’s the only mantra I live by. But I – I did live through all that stuff. And like living through it was great, you know? And so what I try and do is – see just a couple of weeks ago I interviewed Tom Jones again. I’ve known Tom Jones for 30 years now. And he’s of course had this incredible career. But he told a story. He said Michael Jackson came to his house once. Michael Jackson looked at the pictures on his wall and said, ‘man, what a career you’ve had.’ He looked at him and he said, ‘no, having. What a career I’m having,’ right? And he’s right, you know? The minute you look back and say, ‘oh, that was great. I had a great time, didn’t I?’

You’re fucking dead. What’s the point in that? You – you should say, ‘yeah, well, well, I’ve spent a little bit of time having a great time, but what am I going to do today? How am I going to dress today? Where am I going to go today? What am’ – I mean, you know, I – I often say to my wife in the morning, because she does carry the stresses and burdens of life much more heavily than I do, and I said to her, ‘darling, just think of something you want to do today for yourself and just do it. Just have a lovely day. You deserve it. Have a nice day. Everyone deserves it. Try and – even if it’s a small thing. It doesn’t have to cost money, it doesn’t have to take a lot of time.’ I mean I – I’m a big fan of David Lynch and I’ve known David Lynch for many years. And the first time I met him was the kind of late 80s. Well I actually first met him in the early

80s, before I was on TV even, but – and I helped him track down a film that he thought he'd lost, so I was a researcher. And I helped him find this student film he thought he'd lost. It turned out it was in a warehouse in New York. And I – I made a print of it for him and he – he gave me a print, which I donated to the – the BFI. Um, so I've known him since then. But I – I interviewed him properly in about 88 for Channel 4. I did a special with him. And I was talking to him about – and this was when 'Twin Peaks' had just come out. And I said, 'you know, you always seem very chill and calm. And I know you meditate. What else?' He said, 'what else?' He said, 'everyday. Everyday, Jonathan, I give myself a little present. Even if it's like a cup of coffee or a piece of cherry pie. I sit down and say, "this is – this is for you. To make you feel better."' And you think it's kind of important, that sort of like – it's like mindfulness, I guess.

But it's like saying, 'okay, you know what? I deserve something nice.' And even if it literally is putting my feet up here and shutting my eyes for three minutes, that's my little gift to myself. And – and telling yourself it's that and enjoying it for that, that's an important thing. So I'm perfectly happy as a slightly out of shape 60 year old with a huge wardrobe of vintage clothing that he can barely fit into because I'm still alive.

KIRI: Oh, gorgeous. Well I – oh, this – what a beautiful, beautiful way to look at things. Is there – in terms of your clothing now and thinking about presents to yourself, is – have you got a piece of clothing that you put on and you just instantly feel amazing in?

JONATHAN: Um, I've got an outfit I wore recently that I really liked. Um, which I put together. And – I mean the one I'm wearing today I'm happy with. I like that. I like these pink trousers with these white – black and white shoes. But let me find this for you.

Hold it. Uh, I'm going to put on some magnifying glasses now, which people of my age need for reading the back of pill packets and even looking at their phone. Even when they have their text set as large as that, I still need a fucking magnifying glass. Hold it. Let me look at this picture. It'd be a while back. It's when I was in 'The Masked Dancer.' Here it is, okay. So I put this together. I really like this one. This is, um, it's, uh, Gaultier fitted trousers.

KIRI: Ooh.

JONATHAN: Sorry, no. It's modern Gucci flared trousers and that's a vintage Gaultier top with a kind of leopard skin inlay, and that's a – just a vintage 1970s geometric pattern shirt.

KIRI: Oh, that's lovely. That's so nice.

JONATHAN: That's my wardrobe at home. You see I'm standing on the floor. It has these – these built on boxes with all the shoes in.

KIRI: Well I'd seen this. I'd seen this on your Instagram.

JONATHAN: Yeah.

KIRI: Yeah, and I was like, 'that is one hell of a dressing room.'

JONATHAN: Yeah.

KIRI: It – with the Perspex floor.

JONATHAN: Yeah.

KIRI: Incredible.

JONATHAN: But see even that – I mean that’s a great book. If you’re talking about style, this is by a guy called Paul Gorman, who I follow on Instagram. And it’s a book about the look, which looks at different styles and how rock stars looked in that period. And then in there there’s a picture there of Iggy Pop and David Bowie going on a train trip together in Berlin. Look at that.

KIRI: Both of them look amazing.

JONATHAN: Bowie’s wearing like Japanese slippers, look. And a flat cap. So the top half’s ‘Peaky Blinders’ and the bottom half is kind of like Kurosawa.

KIRI: I love it. I absolutely love it. Um, oh, I wanted to ask, what’s your relationship with – like with shopping? Do you love it? Do you want to be in the shop? Do you like online shopping? Is it a bit of everything?

JONATHAN: Um, a friend of mine said just a while ago, she said – she told us, she said, ‘I – I – whenever I look at buying my clothing, I always think, “do I like it enough to have to go through that terrible moment where I’m waiting in line at the queue? And I have to deal with the salesperson who might not be particularly nice?”’ You know? And I think yeah, you’re right, there is an exchange. Is it – is it worth that chunk of my life? These days with online shopping, of course, that isn’t an issue. Sometimes I like – I used to love it. Certain shops, when you went in certain shops, if they were filled – because shopping used to be an experience. An experiential thing. So if you were going to Johnson’s in the King’s Road, it was amazing. Because you went in there, the people behind the till were all dressed in a certain way, the music they were playing was probably music you hadn’t heard before. And that’s what I loved about it. And I – I don’t think those shops exist

anymore. Everything's so bland. I mean I loathe – I fucking loathe big chains like, um, All Saints, you know? The designs are ripped off other people anyway, it looks to me like it's half ghost and half Vivienne Westwood, and the inside, those stupid sewing machines. I mean what if someone really wanted a sewing machine? They can't buy them anymore. They've – All Saints have bought them all. But the fact that they've – they've bought up big buildings now. That so much of London has become, I don't know what other cities are like, but it's been fuelled by the combination of ridiculous business rates put in place by the government and the greed of – of landlords, means that there aren't small shops anymore, you know? And if I – if and when I become mayor, Kiri, um, I would – I would make sure that there was a certain number of shops that's just given to young fashion students for sixth months after they graduate. And say, 'here you go. These are shops – this is a pop up area here where you go in and you have it for sixth months. Sell some stuff, you know?'

KIRI: Wow.

JONATHAN: 'Put your designs out there. Let people come and see it.' Because that's how shops like PX happened. That's how shops like, you know, uh, like Seditary's in a way happened. Malcolm McLaren used to know the guy who ran Paradise Garage, uh, in the King's Road. And he – and he was going to go to New York for sixth months. He said, 'look after the store for me.' Malcolm just sort of took it over.

KIRI: Wow.

JONATHAN: And then back then rents were cheap, it was a part of town no one wanted to go to. And – and word would spread. And if you knew – we would travel. If I knew there were clothes in a

certain way – if you were looking for plastic trousers that you couldn't buy anywhere because you were – probably, you wouldn't – you'd take three bus journeys to get to an obscure soul boys shop in Dalston. And now you – you got those trousers and you went, 'oh, thank god.' You know? It's like you – you'd make the effort. So I – I don't like chain stores, you know? I don't mind going to stores like Selfridges or Liberty's where there's lots of little franchises within it. That's quite fun. But that's because they still have Kensington Market, you know? When you'd go to Kensington Market back in the day they used to have all those little stalls with young designers. I just wish there was places more where you could see new ideas being tried out, you know? Without it – and when you go to – look, I'm lucky enough that I've got money. So if you go to an expensive store it's always a lovely experience. If you go into Gucci or Balmain or one of those stores and they don't think you're there shoplifting, they will treat you in a very lovely way, you know?

And – and it's a nice experience. Or like Belstaff, you know? You go in a shop that smells nice. But – but ultimately though I'd much rather, I think, I'd rather – I'd rather have to work for it. If I was going to go to a shop, I'd rather someone tell me – there was a shop I didn't go to in London that someone said was good called Pineal Gland for a while, which sold weird Japanese design. And I – and I wish I'd seen that. And they said that was a bit like an early – like one of the early punk shops with weird displays, you know? Um, but it doesn't seem to be that sense of – everything is now more – because it's so expensive these days to want something. There isn't that sense of fun or playfulness, you know? There aren't shops where they just have – where they devote a huge amount of space. I mean I was talking to my wife about Biba. The great department store Biba that was set up, um, in the 70s in Kensington. And one of the reasons why it went bust is they

designed it just to make it look beautiful. And so in actual fact, in terms of the way that the floor space was being used, the – there was probably only a third as much of stuff on display as you would find in that store now. Because they had seating areas and they had curtains and drapes and stairs going up and arty lighting. Also the fact that people working there were not really paying attention, about a third of their stock was shoplifted. That's another reason why it went out of business. But it's an amazing experience, and I don't think you really have that anymore, you know? And I'd love – I'd love it if there were more places like that. Even – even going in Camden market used to be a lot more fun than it is now. Obviously we've had lockdown, but you used to be in there and you never knew what shop was around the corner. But now it does seem to be that – that everyone has to turn such a big profit just to keep a space going that there isn't that sense of experimentation anymore.

KIRI: Yeah, they can't take the risks because their overheads are so high.

JONATHAN: Yeah. They can't afford to.

KIRI: Yeah.

JONATHAN: It's a real shame.

KIRI: Do you think about, um, because you have got a lot of vintage and you're getting stuff made for you now, is – do you think any of that is to do – do you think about sustainability and – and – well, I know you don't like chains, so there's –

JONATHAN: Oh, yeah. One of the reasons why I like buying vintage is because it's not wasteful, you know? I mean it isn't, you

know, it's like – and it's odd because I have a, you know, a – a mixed relationship with things. Because I am sort of quite acquisitive. I think it's partly because I was somewhat deprived in my youth of material things, that obviously I think I have an emotional connection to having things, which is perhaps unhealthy. Um, and you know my office here is filled with collectibles. But also I do like – I like rescuing things from the past. So I've got a bunch of vintage record players here, which I've had restored. I've got more record players than I could actually – but I've got about six record players in here. You can only really use one at a time. I've learned that to my cost, right? But, um, I love seeing them. I love seeing them brought back to life. And I will eventually pass them to other people. And I have a large collection of comic book art from the 60s and 70s, and in a way I – I'm aware of the fact that really you're not – you don't own it.

You're a custodian of it. You're looking after it for the next generation or for when it will eventually be in a museum or something.

And I feel that way about a lot of my clothes, which is that, you know, and I saved a lot in storage. I've got a lot of shoes by Patrick Cox, for example, which were so odd that I had to save. You know, I bought – I remember having a pair of chisel-toed slingbacks I bought from him in a black lizard skin sort of thing, like – amazing, remarkable shoes. They're – we used to scare people. I wore them walking around Disneyland once and people were pulling their children away from me, you know? So there was – it was an affront. Um, so I like holding onto that stuff because I know that I will eventually give it to the V&A or somewhere, you know? This stuff will survive. Or I'll give it to, you know, like my, uh, my youngest daughter's boyfriend at the moment, he's – he's the only one who's about the same size as me. My son is not the same

size as me. So I'll give him stuff all the time and he loves it. He can't believe his luck. He's walking around in one of my old Yves Saint Laurent cardigans as we speak. He just looks – I'm forcing – the only downside is, all of my clothes look a lot better on him than they ever did on me.

KIRI: That's not fair, is it?

JONATHAN: Which is massively depressing. He didn't even pay for them.

KIRI: What's the – what's the best item, then, that you've got from either a charity shop or a car boot or secondhand or thrifted?

JONATHAN: I mean recently I would've thought – I mean I did have, you know, that funny little thing I said earlier of me and Jane that some would appear – back then I used to go out with her and we'd find stuff. You could – I don't think you can find vintage stuff as easily now as you used to be able to. When I was young, some shops opened in Covent Garden and King's Road called Flip. They used to sell secondhand old vintage American clothing that they'd got out of a warehouse in America. And still there was – and when they first opened, the stuff you could get there was fucking amazing. Like bowling shirts, original overcoats, 501s from the 50s, original shoes like those kind of, um, American shoes that were blue and white. Saddle shoes, you know? And all that stuff. They had amazing stuff that you could just get. So I had a lot of stuff from Flip back in the day and I had an overcoat which I wore for about four or five years. Recently I mean I've got a – a Yohji, uh, Yamamoto black overcoat, which is – you can wear with anything, which looks great. And you – you put it on and you kind of feel like you're in an Ultravox video from the 1980s. I – I do

wish I'd saved more. I – I used to have a Thierry Mugler overcoat with – shoulders were so wide that you had to turn sideways to go through doorways, you know? It was like literally they were like that. So I miss that sort of stuff. But – but mainly it's like, you know, I've got some shirts that I bought in – in, uh, secondhand stores that I've walked past or I've seen in places, and a lot of stuff I bought online. And some of it's the cheaper stuff, you know? Like I bought vintage shirts on ebay, uh, for like, you know, 25 quid, which – which I love and I would wear much more than an Yves Saint Laurent shirt which someone bought for me for a TV show that cost 500 quid, you know, or something silly like that.

KIRI: Yeah. Yeah. It's that whole thing of like in terms of sustainability if you wear something 30 times it pays itself back to the planet. But then I always think if you buy something vintage as well, it's had at least 30 wears, so like it's a win win.

JONATHAN: Already. The planet owes you. The planet owes you. So if you buy vintage stuff then you're allowed three or four new items from Boohoo or Asos or PrettyLittleThing or Shein or Romwe.

[Electronic music]

KIRI: Your style, which is so clear to me, so distinct and brilliant and bold, do you see it changing as you get older? Can you see yourself getting wilder? More conservative?

JONATHAN: I mean I – you know, I don't kind of like to think too much about – look, when you get to 60 you don't like to think too much about the future because it is sort of depressing to be frank, you know? Like when you're 40 you think, 'well in ten years' time I'll still be 50, I'll be doing the same.' But when you're 60, you

think, 'in ten years' time I'll be 70.' That's kind of depressing. Um, and it doesn't mean you can't wear the same things, but I've got no idea of how I'm going to look or what I'm going to be doing, you know? As I said, when I was 40 I knew in ten years' time I'd be kind of looking roughly the same and doing roughly the same things. I might still be working in ten years' time, I might not. And if I'm not working, to be honest with you one of the reasons why I quite like working at the moment is because it gives me an excuse to put clothes on, you know? It's one of the – because you don't really go out anymore. I mean none of us do at the moment, of course. But it's like, you know, I don't go clubbing anymore, so where else do I get the chance to wear silly clothes and get looked at? On TV, you know?

When we met when I did that show with you and Rhod Gilbert, it was nice to have an excuse to put some nice clothes on, you know? And you were all glammed up and, uh, Shazia was glammed up as well, you know? It like was nice. We all had a chance to – so – so maybe I'll still be working occasionally, but how I'll be dressing I don't know. I mean I do look back – if you're looking back at people who you admire in the past, Quentin Crisp always kept a great sense of style till very much his older years, you know? Um, and so did sort of like, uh, um, what's his name? Um, Charles Hawtrey. Do you know Charles Hawtrey from the Carry On films?

KIRI: Yes.

JONATHAN: Sort of – there's an amazing picture of him walking down the road wearing like a – a woman's 70s nightie and a handkerchief tied around – he looks amazing. So I kind of like – I like to think I'll dress like a kind of elderly homosexual with style, you know? I mean I'll be – I'll be taking my – my dressing tips from

Boy George as always, you know? So if he – if he thinks it's okay to still wear a hat and a flamboyant scarf, then I'll be with him. But I, you know, you do tend to get slightly more conservative as you get older, just because the clothes that are made for older people are, you know? And the – and the way they fit are more like that. But I've got – I don't know what I'll be wearing, frankly. And also you know what? It's unhealthy to be honest with you, Kiri. I don't want to cast shade on you here, but frankly I wish you hadn't asked me that, because it's unhealthy to start thinking – to plan. I think it's unhealthy to plan too far ahead. You know?

KIRI: Fair. Fair.

JONATHAN: It's like you've got to – you've got to try and stay pretty much in the moment. That's all you've got.

KIRI: You're going to hate my last question.

JONATHAN: I'm not even going to – I'm not even going to answer it.

KIRI: [laughs] You've got to because I really want to hear what you're going to say. Um, uh, is there an item of clothing you can always see yourself wearing then?

JONATHAN: Um, I mean there are some things. It depends because you – you have such a different relationship with the different items of clothing, you know? I have a very different relationship with shoes than I have with trousers. And a very different relationship to overcoats than I have with jackets, even, and shirts. I mean I think – I think there will always be some animal print in my wardrobe, certainly. And there will always – hopefully there will always be something shiny, you know? I like –

and hopefully it'll always be something with a – an extra completely unnecessarily detail. I mean I – I like something that has a completely pointless buckle, you know? Or – I mean I've got a pair of trousers, and I can't think where I got them from, they're kind – they're kind of like women's trousers but I think they were for men. And they're – they're sort of like an elasticated waist. They fit quite tight. But they've got – where the belt loops should be, they've got these big silver rings. And I think maybe you're meant to loop a scarf through it. I'm not sure. But I kind of – I kind of like them. I wear them even though they're too tight for me. Just because it's like so – I like having these extra loops hanging off it, you know? So, um, I don't know why. I find it oddly reassuring that you're wearing something where the design, the thought that's gone into it, even if you don't understand it, it's apparent, you know? You can see it.

I don't really – I don't ever really want to dress just functionally, you know? So that – that's – so I don't know whether I have one item, but certainly – the items that will still fit that have – I mean I – I'd like to think my – my big love, if I had to choose one designer over all other designers whose work I've loved over the years, it would be Jean Paul Gaultier. And the great sad thing is that he doesn't make menswear anymore because it was amazing. And I wish now – I wish I'd known it was going to end. Of course you'd stop and think, 'of course it was going to end.' Of course people stop doing these things. But I never – otherwise I would've just bought much more of it back in the day and just saved it in boxes and opened it each year as if it was new, you know? Um, but, uh, so that – that stuff, Gaultier stuff that I've got, I will definitely keep wearing.

KIRI: Love it. Are there any trends you're hoping never come back?

JONATHAN: No, I welcome all trends. I don't have any problem with any style. Even a shell suit. I don't care. You know, it's like – which I believe they now call 'technical', when people wear a shell suit, they call it a 'technical material.' Like Gucci make a shell suit and they say, 'made in technical fucking fabric,' whatever that is. Um, no. I don't have any – I mean I like all styles. I like the mullet, I like the perm. I mean the perm for men was always a bit of an ask, but I'd go with it if it came back in. Um, no. I like high waisted trousers and low waisted. I mean I'd like to see more people wearing flares. I think that the flare is still criminally underused as an item of clothing, you know? And it's a great look, you know? It's a great look. Because you've got the tight area up by the ass and the hips, and then you've got that flaring out. It's always – it looks good on everyone. Um, but I don't – I don't have – I'm trying to think if there's a style I don't like. I like everything from the 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s were great, 60s, the mod suits and the cut of that, and then the period later on when it – hippie clothing is great as well. I was never that big on the kind of more dowdy hippie clothing, the kind of eco-friendly, the cheesecloth shirt and the basic denim. I never liked the patchwork denim overcoat that much with the sort of sheepskin collar, but even then, you know, to each their own.

KIRI: Yeah, um, I love it. You're so, um, for someone who's so clear with their style, I – you would think you would be more of a style snob. But you're – you're just taking it all in. It's really lovely to hear.

JONATHAN: I – if I see someone wearing something a little bit unusual, I always feel quite happy. Even if I don't think it looks good on them, you know what I mean? When you see – like I – I'm next door to a yoga studio here. And there's a young guy who

works there, but he might not identify as a guy, I don't know. Because he often wears a blue denim dress, right? And I'll be honest with you, he looks fucking terrible in this blue denim dress. I mean he doesn't look good. I've got a dress. I've got a black maxi Rick Owens dress I bought for myself a while ago, which by the way, I tripped over wearing. I never knew it was so hard to manoeuvre in a maxi dress. I was trying to get out of a small space and I tripped over and fell on someone's lap. So I'm not down on men wearing dresses, it's just I don't like the length of this dress. I don't like the way it's got no sleeves. It's a – it's a – however, I still celebrate every time I see this person wearing that dress. Good luck to them.

KIRI: Love it. Final question. I want to know what outfit would you want to be buried in?

JONATHAN: That's a horrible question to ask. That's a horrible question. Um, well I hope – I hope I die after you, obviously, Kiri. And that's what the nation hopes as well, you know?

[Both laugh]

KIRI: That's what my parents hope.

JONATHAN: Oh, they're in the – they're in the middle of it, so don't worry about that. 'You've got to outlive her.' Um, no, you know what? I don't – I'm not worried about dying. And it's not something that troubles me too much. I mean I kind of don't care, you know? I don't care what people think of me after I'm dead. I don't care what – what I'm wearing, I don't care what they do with my body, you know? Because I'll be dead. I mean if I had to – I mean I thought Prince Philip did it amazingly well. Fancy designing your own car to carry your body off. That's an amazing

level of thought. So maybe I should put a bit more thought into it because I applaud his choices. God bless him. Um, I don't know. I mean something – I'd rather it not be too uncomfortable, but I'd quite like it to be stylish. Maybe I should choose this. I mean I'm probably going to be burned anyway, so, you know, I don't – I suspect I won't be buried buried. Um, but my son, I was talking to my son recently, and, uh, he normally – he works at home but he designs video games. And he normally wears pyjamas, basically. He was known locally – in the local corner shop, they refer to him as 'pyjama man', okay? That's what they call him. And I said to him once, I bought him some trousers and I bought some of these sort of like day trousers you wear to the office but they look quite smart but they've got an elasticated waist. I said, 'I know you don't like formal clothing, but I thought if and when you do have to go and meet somebody, you might.' He said, 'oh, these are great.' He said, 'yeah, I don't like anything that's uncomfortable.' He said, 'I don't think anyone died saying, 'you know what I wish I spent more time doing when I was alive? Wearing uncomfortable trousers.'

And he's right, you know? So maybe bury me in something that's a little forgiving but stylish. That's what I'd like. So, um, or maybe something – maybe I'll wear, you know, maybe I'll – I'll flout convention somewhat. I did wear, uh, I had a couple of Jean Paul Gaultier suits that had skirts involved back in the day. I wore a blue checked one to the premiere of 'Pulp Fiction', right? So maybe I'll dig that out. So it was like a kind of long – because my hair was terrible at the time. Me and Vic Reeves got drunk together and we cut each other's hair, right? And we both looked terrible, um, and it was like the night before I started a new TV show so I had to keep it for about six weeks. Um, but it was a nice – it's kind of like a blue checked jacket with a blue pleated skirt.

So maybe I'll wear that with some high socks and some black boots.

KIRI: Oh my god, what a look.

JONATHAN: And sunglasses.

KIRI: Sunglasses.

JONATHAN: Very very large, uh, Guccis.

KIRI: Love it. Oh my god. Exactly the kind of strong look I would expect from you.

JONATHAN: Going out strong.

KIRI: Oh my god, Jonathan, you – what an amazing conversation. You've been so generous with your time. Thank you so much for talking to me. This has been delightful.

JONATHAN: Well I enjoyed doing it. Well I like you, so that's why I wanted to talk to you.

KIRI: Oh, thanks, mate.

JONATHAN: My pleasure. Bye.

[Electronic music]

KIRI: We had some really nice messages from you guys on Instagram, um, which I wanted to share. Um, I love this one from Alice on Instagram, who said of our illustration, which is done by the brilliant Mary of @mythsntits, um, check her out on Insta.

We've tagged her in stuff. And she's a brilliant queer Welch illustrator and has just exactly nailed what we wanted from our logo. Alice said, 'it's so nice to see an illustration of someone who's got rolls from their bra.' Yes. 'The illustrator didn't make you inexplicably a size six and I'm so happy and feel seen.' Yeah, um, I don't think I even said to Mary, um, like 'make me as fat as I am,' but she – she did. Um, and that is so great because that's the other thing, isn't it? That when you get like Photoshopped without your permission or, you know, someone does an illustration and it's much thinner. You're like, 'oh, you're telling me that my body should be smaller and that I should take up less space.' So it was great that she just did that instinctively.

I think the only direction I might have given was, um, the same one I give to make-up artists, which is my hair can only be too small, never too big, and also make sure the underwears are matching because I don't think I've ever worn it in my life. Um, loved the message from Hailey on Twitter as well, who said that she cannot wait for this. Hailey, I hope you've enjoyed the first episode. I'm so scared. But I'm so excited because I think you're going to love it.

Um, really cool message from Claire Nightingale on Insta, who also said, 'when I was 16 and I went for my interview with my fashion degree course, my would-be lecturers, Judith and Jill, cooed over my shoes. "Who's are they?" I was astray and didn't – didn't say, 'mine'. But – but I didn't sound any classier when I replied, in my North London estuary twang, 'Dalcy's.' 'Oh, I love a bit of Dalcy's. In fact I think when I was growing up I thought Dalcy's was like the place to be. It was like, 'no babes, these are ShoeZone. These are Dalcy's.' Um, I mean we all want to see a picture of those shoes now, Claire. Um, you can send us that picture, um, or anything else you've got. Or if you've got anything

you want to say about the podcast. Love to hear from you. You can email us at whoareyouwearingpod@gmail.com. And I would love it if you followed us on Instagram as well. So the Instagram page is where we're going to be chucking loads of the pictures up, um, from the episodes. So when people mention stuff in their interviews we're going to do our best to one, get a picture out of them, um, so that's [whoareyouwearingpod](#) on Instagram.

So yeah, you can go over there, follow us on Instagram, and hopefully see the outfits that we are talking about. So obviously I love clothes and fashion and style, hence this podcast, but part of that is also I just really love small businesses, uh, because I just see so much creativity and cheerleading and sustainability in small businesses. So I thought I would take this chance to crow about one I love. I'm going to try and do this every episode. So let's start with Fizz Goes Pop and the brains behind it, Liz. So Liz is an incredible maker of jewellery and homeware who does a beautiful line in mirrored acrylic and ply jewellery. All designed and made in her studio in Cardiff. I love her ethos and her creativity. I do honestly think you're going to absolutely love her too. If ever I wear stuff of hers on the telly – yes, guys, I'm doing alright – people always ask me where I got them from. Um, now if she's not too busy as well, swamped with releasing beautiful collections, she does custom pieces too. So if you see me with an incredible pair of enormous mirrored acrylic Welsh dragons on my earlobes, that is where they're from. Liz is great on Insta. Just really normal and talks you through the process and loads of it is, um, led by like followers' engagement. So like we get to pick what goes in the collections, which is really fun. So follow her there at [fizzgoespop](#), or check out her website.

[Electronic music]

KIRI: Thanks so much for listening. I hope you enjoyed this episode and we will be back next week with the fantastic Susan Wokoma. Oh my god, it's such a good chat. I absolutely cannot wait for you to hear it. Thanks for listening. Bye.

[Electronic music]

Who Are You Wearing is produced by Jo Southerd, the artwork is by Mary Phillips, and the music is by Ani Glass. This has been a Little Wander production.