

Who Are You Wearing: Seye Adelekan

[Upbeat electronic music]

KIRI PRITCHARD-MCLEAN: Hello and welcome to the Who Are You Wearing podcast. I'm Kiri Pritchard-Mclean and this week's guest is the super stylist, ridiculously talented Seye Adelekan. Now Seye is probably best known as the bassist in Gorillaz or from playing with Paloma Faith. But he is best known to me as one of the best dressed people on my Instagram.

As soon as I started this podcast I was in his DMs like an absolute creep. What I didn't expect was to have an incredibly profound and open chat with Seye. He was and is incredible. So this interview was recorded in May 2021. Seye was at his place in London and I was in a cupboard in North Wales because I'm relentlessly showbiz. Now just a heads up, we're going to be talking about addiction and male mental health. I'm really proud of this episode and I hope you enjoy us asking Seye Adelekan, 'who are you wearing?'

SEYE ADELEKAN: Yeah, in the early 90s I just got fascinated with MTV. Even though I don't think I was even necessarily allowed to watch it. But like I have three brothers, two sisters. All of us are quite different. Um, so there was a whole like – everybody listened to different music, my brother had his like Naughty by Nature posters and that. And which I remember like looking at them being, 'that was really cool.'

But then just seeing music videos, um, and yeah, again, someone like Prince or like Michael Jackson – like Michael Jackson in particular as well, because I was just like, 'I don't understand what you are.' Like are you black? Are you white? Um, but just like the

– like the ‘Bad’ leather jacket, like that look. And then the next album’s a whole different look. I remember the video for ‘Do You Remember The Time’, just thinking sort of this ancient Egyptian chic thing going on, which I thought was really fascinating.

And then also like the Joker from ‘Batman’ from, uh, Tim Burton’s original ‘Batman.’ Um, not only again Prince again, he’s – like he did the – the Bat dance and all this stuff. Like the soundtrack. But I just thought Jack Nicholson as the Joker was so fly. And just like, I mean, Michael Keaton as well as Batman I think was perfect. But it’s like that like sort of early 90s like between 90 – like 91 and 94 was sort of like when I started seeing just all these things on TV that I just thought were – like were super cool and just really – I – I gravitated towards the sort of flamboyant.

KIRI: So what was your style then as a kid? Were you seeing stuff on MTV and being like, ‘okay, how do I – how do I dress me like that?’

SEYE: Um, not really. It’s – I think it’s also around a similar time that me and my brother started drawing comics. I think I drew – I drew my characters in some pretty mad things. Um, as opposed to – because I – I was just – I also was just like, ‘I don’t think I can – these clothes aren’t real.’ In my head I was just like, ‘and I’m a kid, so how am I going to dress like that?’

I can’t even remember, really, what I was wearing. My mum like had a bunch of stuff and we’d have a little bit of a say in what we wore, but like, um, you know, I really enjoyed dressing up for church on Sunday because we always – we grew up going to church. Um, I particularly liked this one look me and my brother had. Like we had matching waistcoats and bowties and these like

green jeans, [laughs] um, which I thought was – I think my mum – that was – that was her master stroke and she created a monster.

[Kiri laughs]

SEYE: Yeah, I thought that was a dope look. I didn't beg my parents to buy me like some silver, I don't know, helmet. I don't know. Um, again when you're a kid, I – I was potentially sort of not necessarily scared but I was just like – I didn't – I just didn't think the stuff that I potentially would want to wear really existed, especially for – especially for a kid. I was just like, 'I'd love to have like a tuxedo and like, you know, but it was just like that – I'm not – I'm not the Joker from Batman so why am I going to – where's that going to happen?'

KIRI: [laughs] I love it that that's the – like the two types of people is like Joker from Batman or you're a kid. Those are the only – the only two things.

SEYE: Yeah, it's like what – there's nothing else. I can't wait until I'm – like I'm old enough to be the Joker.

KIRI: So you – was your mum dressing you? But you had brothers and sisters. Did your sisters or your brothers have any say in what you wore?

SEYE: I feel like my older sister bought me dungarees, which was cool. I liked – I liked – yeah, I remember a lot of dungarees going on. Um, and my sister, Ronke, was the one who got the first pair of DMs and like she was wearing them to school as well. Because they straddle that line between formal enough to get away with at school but like cool enough to be cool. Um, and it was the 90s as well, so this was like – this was – it was prime like DM wearing.

Like Jeff Buckley's wearing DMs. It was like, 'these are the coolest.' Um, yeah.

Like my – my siblings, I don't think they necessarily had any say in what I wore. Again you'd have to ask them. I can't really remember. Um, but I just know, yeah, they're all really like cool. Um, especially my brother. My oldest brother, Niyi, I remember him having the like typical like the 90s brick top and the circular like glasses. Sunglasses.

KIRI: Love it.

SEYE: Um, I thought it was like a super, super strong look.

KIRI: Full Fresh Prince like –

SEYE: Yeah, exactly.

KIRI: Love it.

SEYE: He even – he might have – he might even have had the flip ones, you know? Like from that other show, 'A Different World'. Um, yeah, man. It was a strong time. A strong time. Hence why, you know, all those looks have come back.

KIRI: Yeah, they're – yeah, definitely. Um, incidentally I was talking to comedian Darren Harriott yesterday and he was saying he loved that kind of – that look of that 90s Fresh Prince look. And I said 'I'm – I'm talking to Seye tomorrow and I was like, 'I think you'd love his style.' And I sent him your Instagram page and he messaged me back and went, 'I've immediately followed him. He's so stylish.' I was like, 'see, I told you.'

[Both laugh]

SEYE: That's why he started following me. I saw that. I was, 'oh, that's wicked.' I'd seen him – oh, where did I see him? I saw him like at a club like last – not last year, the year before. Um, I was just like, 'oh, this guy's super dope.' Yeah, thanks for the hook-up. He's – he's a g.

KIRI: He's great. He's really well-dressed. And both of you have a similar I think approach to putting outfits together. It's really cool. Um, so back – back to the interview, rather than just like setting up stylish people with each other. It's interesting you say about going to church and liking putting those clothes on. Because lots of people when they talk about going to church as kids they – that was the time that they felt very sort of repressed and lots of formal stuff they didn't like. But you liked that kind of stuff.

SEYE: Yeah, so when I moved back to – so I was born – born in Nigeria, moved to Holland when I was two, but moved back to Nigeria when I was six. And going to church was the thing. Like have a butcher's at like a Nigerian church on the weekend and you'll see the flyest people you've ever seen. Like amazing. Like I just thought it looked – it just looked so cool. It just looked like a music video, I felt.

Um, and yeah, I think there's something – I've always liked the process. The formality of it. Um, even though it's not necessarily a formal occasion, especially like a Nigerian church isn't all that formal. Um, that's quite a blanket statement, by the way. But like the church we went to, a Baptist church up there, um, you got dressed up and it was a celebratory feeling as opposed to – I think a lot of kids have the experience where it almost feels like you're going to a funeral or something. Like you get put – you put on

these clothes that you never would wear, then you sit – you have to sit in silence and you have to – like there’s – it feels really restricted.

Um, but it can be quite raucous in a like Nigerian like church. Like and going to like Sunday school was really fun. Um, yeah. And there’s just something where everybody did it. It’s like in some churches it depends on like your parents. Like if they’re like, ‘oh, we dress – we get dressed up for church and, you know, we’re going to go have this formal time.’ But if everybody is dressing up to the nines, it’s like, ‘oh, everyone’s doing it. Let’s have a crack.’

And eventually that became where I started like dressing up the most. Like went – so coming up to like my teenage years, it was like going to church on the weekend was like – that’s where I busted out my new swag. And it was – it was the only place besides – because, you know, you go to school all – all week and my – initially my social group – like we didn’t – obviously we were kids, so we didn’t really have anywhere to go out. And before I was going to house parties and stuff, so it was just like, ‘where am I – where can I go flex?’ And it was like youth group and Sunday.

[Both laugh]

KIRI: I love it. I love it.

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: Were you ever made to wear – as a kid, then, were you ever made to wear anything that you hated?

SEYE: Um, no. I think I was into – I was into it all, really. Um, yeah, no. I think – I think I might’ve had to wear – there might’ve been

something pink that I was – maybe because I got teased for it, that I didn't like. Like I was – I think I loved it when I was going to – either to school or to church or something like that. And then as soon as I got teased for it, I started feeling bad about it. But until I got teased for it, I was just like, 'this looks sick.' Um –

KIRI: So horrible when stuff like that happens, isn't it? When you like – like when you can remember starting I guess to feel shame as a kid.

SEYE: Yeah. It – that's the – that's – it's such a powerful feeling because you – like that stuff stays with you, doesn't it? Like especially when you feel good about something. It's just like – and there's no reason for you not to. And until someone else points – it's – that's – it always happens from outside in. Like it's kind of hard for it to start inside out. Um, and yeah. It's just like as soon as people start – started doing that, it's just like you start thinking about what people think and it's like, 'oh no.' It's just like, 'oh, well don't put an earring in your right ear because you're gay.' It's like, 'what?' Like that – you know, ridiculous stuff, right? Um, and now I wear it in my right ear all the time, so screw you.

KIRI: I remember when I was a kid, right? So I had loads of hand me downs from my brothers, um, because there wasn't like loads of money when we were growing up. Well definitely not for clothes and stuff anyway.

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: Um, and then there was – I – growing up I lived near a caravan park.

SEYE: Cool.

KIRI: So there used to be these like Scouse families who would come over, like with girls. And they'd give me like a bin bag of old clothes that they didn't want.

SEYE: Wow.

KIRI: And like they were from the city so they were really fashionable. But it was from like however long, you know? They'd grown out of it a while and no one in the family wanted it. So I'd get these bin bags of clothes. And I remember wearing like proper like 90s jeans.

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: That were like white denim with like flowers on and like an oversized jumper and I had a bow in my hair. And I remember thinking like, 'this outfit was incredible.' And then went to – I wore it to go to London, which is very exciting.

SEYE: Woo!

KIRI: Me and my mum went to London. And I remember getting on the tube and sitting down and a row of people looking at me and all bursting out laughing.

SEYE: Oh my god.

KIRI: And I was like – I was so embarrassed. And I was like, 'never dare to dream again.'

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: I was so like, 'what have I done?'

SEYE: Shut down. 'I'm an idiot. Oh, god.' Yeah, you're right. There's that – that – oh man. I remember, um, this is when I was in my teens going to, oh god, going to – there were these, um, underage discos, um, I think it was called Blush, where – obviously something like that.

KIRI: Love that.

SEYE: Where we're from. Amazing. Um, so it WKD Blues City anyways. Um, but I remember going wearing this – my mum bought me this – like this cream coloured Fruit of the Loom like fleece or something.

KIRI: Okay.

SEYE: Or – it was either a sweatshirt or a fleece. And I was – I was feeling it like hard. To think – thinking back now, it's not what you wear to, you know, a disco where you're trying to sort of cop – as we said, cop off with someone. Um, and yeah. It was – it was until I got there that I realised that no, that's not necessarily what people think is appropriate wear for – for that. I was just like, 'yeah, that's just such a sick cream jumper.' It was like – and then yeah. Got – got rinsed. It was – it was –

KIRI: Oh, it's so brutal. It's so brutal.

SEYE: I'm over it, though.

KIRI: Yeah. Yeah, sounds like it.

[Both laugh]

KIRI: Um, so did you have a favourite like item of clothing when you were growing up? Or an outfit that you just never wanted to take off?

SEYE: I had a – a phase where I loved wearing trucker hats. Um, when I started playing in my band. We were called Auto-Fed. We played skate punk slash emo. And, um, yeah. I think all – for our gigs, um, my outfit was a trucker hat and a basketball, uh, jersey. Um, and obviously baggy flares because obviously. And, um, I think like a pair of like Adidas like shell toes or something like that. Um, so that was like a standard. I loved that look.

Um, but then also on the flip side I also really wanted to be a rude boy. Like I just wanted to be one of the like – just a roadman. So I like – my brother had like a McKenzie tracksuit I used to borrow and then I'd always – but I'd always chuck like a denim jacket over it, because I was just like, 'why not?'

KIRI: Love it.

SEYE: Because I thought that that was a strong look. Um, but, you know, I don't think Bromley High Street did. Um, and –

KIRI: [laughs] I always forget all this is happening in Bromley.

SEYE: I – I happened in Bromley. That's where it all started. And big up Bromley anyways, but yeah, I've moved out. Um, and what else was there? There were just, yeah, phases where there was just certain things I liked. Like I remember the first – was it for my 16th birthday? I got like a bit of money and I went into like FCUK and bought like a pair of – I mean these – they were skinny but then they were flared. And it was like they looked like Shakira

wore them, these jeans. Like they had like some tassely shit. Um, and like some pattern at the bottom.

And I loved these jeans. Like to this day I think about them like two or three times a year. Um, it's like, 'oh yeah, these – these were dope.' Um, and I rinsed those. I think they were quite expensive. I think I never – I didn't know jeans went up to like 60, 70 quid. But I was just like – I spent most of my birthday money on them. And I used to – I remember I used to love wearing them with flip-flops. Um, I used to wear them to church on Sunday evenings. It was like, 'yes, this is the look.'

KIRI: I can totally see it already. I can – I know exactly what you're going for with that.

SEYE: Yeah. Yeah.

[Upbeat electronic music]

KIRI: Did you – you know moving around as a kid to different countries, did you pick up bits of style and trends in each place or like looks?

SEYE: Um, I wouldn't say I necessarily did, but what I would say comes with moving around a lot, is almost like reinventing yourself. Because you have to like as a defence mechanism, I want to fit in wherever I – as a kid, you'd want to fit in wherever you go to.

Um, and I always – like for example that's why I'd say my – my accent used to fluctuate a lot depending on who I was with. Because – and then eventually that just becomes instinctive. You don't actively do it. But initially it was just like, 'yeah, I'm doing

this to – so people don't take the mick out of me.' Um, like I don't even – I don't even remember how I sounded at like when I was growing up.

But it's like when I moved to Nigeria I remember kids taking the mick out of me because I went to a British school in Holland, um, and they were like, 'why are you putting on this – that phoney accent?' I was like, 'I just – I grew up in Holland.' And then like – so I had to correct that. And then when I moved to England, people were like, 'oh, you've got a funny accent.' It's like, 'oh, shit. Okay. Got to correct that.' Um, so you just – you get – you get into this habit of morphing, um. Or I did. At least I did, anyways. Um, so it's – it becomes a bit of, I don't know, changing your character all the time.

Um, which I think it – it teaches you, I think, empathy. Or it taught me a lot of empathy. Sort of when you're teased for being different, you know what it feels like. So you – you're hyper-sensitive to others feeling the same. Um, and yeah. Actually ust try to feel how other people and then you sort of – you – I don't know, you become a bit of a social chameleon. Sometimes that's a bad thing. Um, because then that gives you issues of who – who are you, then. Um, which is definitely something I've – that's a bit of a head wreck. That's also been an issue.

But as a bi-product of that, it comes with you're alright with trying new things. You're okay with being in new situations. Um, like – and I did my sixth form in Ecuador, so it's like, you know, not even knowing the language of somewhere, you know, like – and having to learn a new language to have mates. It's – you – it just – moving around just gets you, I don't know, it opens you up, I think, a bit.

KIRI: I remember when I was a teenager I would sort of like go different places. Don't get me wrong, I wasn't going to Ecuador for sixth form. I more mean I was going from Bangor to Llandudno.

SEYE: Oh, nice. I've played Bangor before, actually. Yeah.

KIRI: [laughs] So – but as a teenager, like identity and subcultures are really important. And, you know, I could like scan a room and be like, 'I would be mates with them.' Because they would have baggy jeans on and a band t-shirt.

SEYE: Yeah yeah yeah.

KIRI: So were you doing a bit of that? Were you sort of like, you know, moving around so many places and yeah, not always having the language? Were you – did you use clothes and like style to try and like seek out your people?

SEYE: When it came to Ecuador I think I did a bit. Because I was a bit older. I was like 16, 17 when I moved there. Um, which I think I turned 17 and 18 out there. Um, so yeah, I – I was a bit older, I had a bit more about me, and like yeah, I gravitated towards say the people who could relate to say British culture a bit more. Um, and – and I found a bunch of kids who were into the same like – similar emo bands that I was into. Um, yeah. You'd sort of – you kind of look at your tribe.

But then I also – again the good thing about being out there was just like I ended up hanging out with people I never thought I would. Um, people who are still friends to this day. Um, and like the – the people who are still – who are my closest mates from out there, some of them are like, 'oh yeah, obviously I was going

to be' – they – they were my champions initially and stayed my champions, you know?

Um, but some of them it was just like – oh, our paths would never normally cross, you know? But I'm glad they did. And that's been – that's been quite cool. Again it sort of – it opens you – opens you up to – if you're open to it, anyways – to being surprised by who you're going to – you never know who you're going to get on with, um, and when you like say go international schools and stuff, everyone's got a madness of a story as well, so it's like you don't know where that person's from, where they're from, so, um, yeah.

It's – it's been a mixture of the two. I've – I gravitated towards certain people but also found myself in the company of and joined the company of people that I never thought would be on my radar, you know?

KIRI: Amazing. When you were a teenager, what were the big sort of like trends that were happening? Did you go in for any of them?

SEYE: Well again, yeah. So that – like the baggy flared like grunger look and band t-shirt, that was – those were my people. Um, you know, belts with studs on for some reason. Fingerless – fingerless gloves. We all – we all fancied Avril Lavigne. Like, you know, Sum 41 – like basically my band Auto-Fed, we looked like we were Sum 41 sort of understudies. Um, you know? Three quarter length and Vans. Even though I don't think I ever had any Vans in the end, but like yeah. That was – that was definitely a vibe.

Um, but then also like I was mad into – I also really liked that, um, RnB group B2K. Like I really, really liked them for some reason.

Um, and like those – one video, like the video for [singing] ‘baby turn around and let me see that sexy body go bum bum bum.’ Anyways, that video, one of the lads had like his hair was like what you call relaxed. And he had – but he had like a visor on. And I think it was upside down. I was like, ‘I think that’s the coolest thing.’ So I really – I got my hair relaxed and I started wearing a white visor slightly to the side and sometimes upside down. Um, that was – that happened as well.

KIRI: [laughs] I love it.

SEYE: Um – um, what else was like a trend back then? Sweat bands. That was a thing. Um –

KIRI: I had sweat bands. I had visors. I had all these things, yeah.

SEYE: Yeah, exactly. You know it’s like that early 2000s was a niche time. Like and most of it bad, let’s be honest.

KIRI: Yeah. I do think that like the skater side of it was not as embarrassing as some of the like high street pop fashion, which was really rank.

SEYE: Yeah. Yeah. Super, super low-cut jeans I remember was just like – like, ‘what is actually going on here?’ Like ooh. Ooh. And hair that looked like shards. Just shards of glass. Like the wettest –

KIRI: Yeah. It’s so sharp. Everything was so sharp.

SEYE: Yeah, the wet look.

KIRI: Everyone’s hip bones, everyone’s frosted tips.

SEYE: Yeah. [laughs] The corners of sunglasses. It was just like those frameless – frameless sunglasses that looked like a sort of a Long Island iced tea. Sort of they fade from like light brown to white or something. It's like, 'alright.'

KIRI: I remember though, fashion-wise, being really excited by a few things about that era. The Strokes coming along in 2001.

SEYE: Yeah, big –

KIRI: I was so like, 'oh my god. Like who are these? They all look like rock stars.' And it felt affordable. Because Converse trainers were affordable, jeans with rips in were affordable, and you could find old t-shirts in charity shops and old suit jackets.

SEYE: Yeah. That's it. That was such a – that was the look exactly. Yeah, that's true, actually. That was – and the like Kings of Leon and yeah, bands like that, you know, the era of the 60s revival is sort of the bands era. And yeah, they all looked – they all looked poor even though like all the Strokes were not.

KIRI: Millionaires. They're the kids of millionaires, yeah.

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: Totally. And I also remember big – this is a little bit later, but Andre 3000 and Kanye West coming along and it being like, 'holy shit, people can dress like this?'

SEYE: Yeah, Andre 300, my word, was just a – like not just the music. I mean the music alone was enough to just – genreless, amazing, whatever. But he like in terms of his style he's beyond genreless. He's like a – an anomaly.

[Upbeat electronic music]

KIRI: When you were a teenager then, did you have like a rebellious phase? And if you did did it show up in what you wore?

SEYE: Um, I definitely had a rebellious phase. Again this was probably later. Like I was a nightmare to my parents, definitely. When I was – when – because when I – when we moved to Ecuador it was just me, my mum, and my dad. Like all my other siblings had flown the coop. I'm the youngest of six. So like everyone had been through the gaff. Um, and that's when I really started acting out. Um, I didn't – like I – I used to have these fake piercing that I'd wear that I'd hide, you know? And I'd just like pop, pop them in when I'd go out sometimes. That was fun.

Um, I was also just too – I was half quite timid to do some of the stuff that I really wanted. Like I did have, you know, jeans with rips in, which my parents hated. But I didn't ever like push it so far to like, 'I'm wearing a mini-skirt, Dad.' Like I didn't go, um, didn't take it – take it quite there. It was more the things that I did as opposed to the things that I wore that really were potentially, you know, that caused friction. Um, but that was definitely the beginning of when my parents started like sort of just like giving up on me in terms of like, 'he's going to wear some madness and let's just leave him to it.' Like that started then and it's – it's been a steady incline ever since.

KIRI: [laughs] With your style today, though, which I think is so, as I said, gorgeous and eclectic and skips again between genres.

SEYE: Thank you.

KIRI: Of like sometimes you're in just this like incredibly like polished suit and then it's a leather jacket and some DMs and a mad hat. It's all just like skips around and is so – it is always – always stylish. But like how – I mean how do your parents feel about what – what you wear now?

SEYE: It's funny, like I – I recently dyed my eyebrows pink. And I've had many conversations with them, like Facetimes, and they haven't mentioned anything yet. I think they've – they've gone past the point of actually saying something now. Um, so I don't – I don't know what they – what they think. Especially – I've started wearing heels a bit. Like I've got these – some platforms, um, from this, um, Atelier de Charlotte. Um, this amazing, uh, Spanish make have made me some like 70s style platforms as like –

KIRI: They're gorgeous. They're so beautiful. I've seen them.

SEYE: Thank you. You should chat to them. They're amazing. They're – I made the mistake of recording, uh, this whole livestream like – like wearing them straight for about ten hours and like I've not worn them since just because I've got a bit of beef with them just for the minute, but I'll get back to wearing them. Um, no.

Like my – at the – at the moment, do you know one thing that changed again coming out of that – that phase where I was like, 'I'm only wearing a suit, bla bla bla.' And I was one of these people who's just like, 'I don't wear trainers.' Like I also had an issue with trainers just because I've got big feet, and I was just like – when I was younger and super skinny, I used to be super skinny, if I wore like a pair of Converse I just looked like Ronald McDonald. Like I looked like an absolute clown. Um, and just like

I've got flat feet as well, so like trainers never looked exactly how they looked on, you know, on other people and all this stuff.

Like it's – it's a – actually quite a big issue that I'm still fighting today, to like – finding shoes that I like is – has been a – has been an ongoing thing. Um, but when – having gone through quite a lot of life transformation and doing a lot of digging in, just like into myself, etc., one thing that I think has freed me up a bit has been getting into just more casual clothes, like a few years ago you'd never catch me dead in a hoodie. Like actually I didn't have – I didn't have any trainers. I didn't have any socks that weren't formal. I didn't have any joggers. I didn't – I barely had t-shirts. Um, and that was – it was just the most pretentious, obnoxious rubbish.

Um, but I think one thing, I think which is also the balance in my wardrobe is actually now – is now matching a balance in my life, where it's like there's – there's a time and place for anything and for new things and for – it's alright to have – it's alright to wear something that someone else has got. Um, i.e. like just being a pair of joggers. Like they're popular because they're bloody comfortable.

Um, but then even within – but then even within that, you can also – you can still be yourself and still, you know, get cool ones, do you know what I mean? Like you can do whatever you want. But it's just the whole idea of sort of separating yourself from other people and again just thinking that, 'I've got to keep up this certain kind of look,' or whatever, um which was super, super toxic.

And like, you know, looking down on anybody for what they wear is a – it's a horrendous thing to do. And obviously it's happened.

When it's – when you know what it feels like, then it's like, 'why would you do that to other people?' Um, so yeah. It's just like now – now yeah, like you say there's some days where I'm wearing like, you know, a massive, gigantic pink hat with, you know, a leather jacket with all the patches on and like snake – snakeskin boots and all this, bla bla bla. But then there's also times where it's like all black, uh, sweatshirt and like some combat boots or something like that. And then it's just joggers and trainers and – or then I'm going to – going to the gym. It's just like I'm just a lot happier for it.

KIRI: That's so interesting. Because when you were talking about the idea of like you didn't have trainers or a t-shirt or anything like that and everything was like turned out and, you know, like everything's a look and everything's a statement about someone who's put together, and yet it feels like what's actually going on inside is the opposite of that. Because also a suit as well, it's like a sign of control. And then you're putting that on to – to hide what you're not feeling inside.

SEYE: A lack of. Exactly. Like and it wasn't just – it wasn't just a suit. It was some next level thing. Like and it was accessorised to within an inch. Like it wasn't just a collar, it was a collar with a bar through it. It was a tie with a tie clip in it. It was like – even my cigarettes, my friend Harry got me this amazing old like vintage Dunhill cigarette holder with a lighter built into it and it's like – it was everything was dialled up to nine.

It was a – it was a good exercise, actually. Um, but it was also just futile. Because the more I poured into the look – and this was every single day. Like rain or shine, getting on a plane or getting a train, um, going to Tesco, whatever. It was knackered. Um, and also it was just like – and I was just wasting – spending lots of

money as well. Because sometimes I just was so depressed I wouldn't do any like – I wouldn't wash anything. So instead of actually just sorting that out, I'd just buy a new shirt if I wanted to go out, even though I had like 12. It was like, 'okay, um' – yeah, it's mad. Like sometimes the people who look the most together are – are not.

KIRI: Also I hope this isn't insensitive, but when you're talking about this and your sort of addiction issues and things like that and – and having this level of turn out, I'm like – I can't think of anything worse than being hungover and being in a suit. Like all I would want to be is joggers and a hoodie.

SEYE: Yeah, exactly. But it's – you're right. It – it was – it makes no – no sense. Like one of the – the thing about that is like I feel like your clothes should reflect your mood. And when they don't it actually becomes corrosive. And it's like the times when it was appropriate to wear that wouldn't matter, because I'm wearing it all the time.

It's like when I'm hungover – when I was hungover, I should've just been – if I was meeting someone up, it'd just be like, oh man, get the sunnies on and just feel terrible. But it's like – and it's alright to feel terrible, but I wasn't allowing myself to – I wasn't being honest, basically. Um, and yeah. It really – it really weighs down on you, that.

KIRI: And really, um, insightful of you to have done that work to realise that's what was going on with you now.

SEYE: Yeah, it's – it's quite painful to think about, actually. Because it's just like, 'shit, I was in so much pain.' And it – and it got worse. It just got, you know, it got really bad.

KIRI: And I suppose people didn't even, um, because you're doing all this leg work to make it all look like everything's smashing it. I wouldn't look at you and assume and think there's a guy that needs help.

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: But that's also what you're doing, right? It's your...

SEYE: It's – yeah. Was desperate for it but couldn't talk about it, which is the – it's one of the most important parts of, um, any kind of recovery or whatever. It's just like the – you feel shame – ashamed for – for talking about it, whereas like the people that will love you the most won't care. But you think you're letting people down or whatever.

And it's just like – it's like just try speaking to someone, because I bet you there's someone in your life that is willing to listen, um, even when you – when you think that there isn't. More people are on your side than you actually think, and I thought – I thought I had to impress everybody, um, and be alright. And it's just like – like I think most of my – my closest friends and stuff, because I – because I started to, uh, I started neglecting them and started being a bit showbiz. And it's just like, they were all like – they could smell a rat, um, but – and I just didn't let them in, really. Um, but yeah. To the person who didn't necessarily know me or whatever, they'd be like, 'yeah, this guy looks – he's – he's smashing life.' It was just like, 'nah, mate.'

KIRI: 'Oh, I'm a shell. Just a – I've just got a nice tie.' [laughs]

SEYE: Yeah, I've just like – I look sick but I feel sick.

[Upbeat electronic music]

KIRI: The style that we see now, which is – it seems like you give yourself much less of a hard time. You feel – it seems like – when I look you I'm like, 'there is a guy who is – knows himself and is like at peace with himself.' Because there's this confidence there. When did that style start appearing?

SEYE: So I went into rehab April 1 2019, um, and in the run up to that I got rid of a lot of stuff. Um, because I was – I was moving out of my flat, I was moving away. I say I did, actually, I was in such a state that I just went to my mum and dad's gaff up north and my mum went down south and cleared out my flat.

KIRI: Wow.

SEYE: Like I couldn't even – I couldn't do that. And the things she must've seen. I feel so sorry for her. But big up, Jane Adelekan. You're a saint. Um, and I – I basically had lost – I just got rid of a lot of stuff in my wardrobe. Gave loads to charity. Like, um, and basically just had a cull. Like I went to this centre with a bag, um, and that alone is sort of mentally refreshing. It's just like, 'man, I don't have to carry that anymore,' do you know what I mean?

Um, because it just like – a lot of the things I wore actually weren't necessarily because I wanted to. It was just because I had the – I just felt this need to seem alright. Um, or – or seem like, you know, rock and roll or, you know, whatever. Like it wasn't necessarily for the right reasons. Um, so that's when it began. And obviously in the centre, spending ten months at this centre, um, was rock hard. Because it was like no – no phones, no internet, no

TV. Um, two phone – two incoming and outgoing phone calls, 15 minutes a week. Like it was – it was brutal.

KIRI: Wow.

SEYE: Like I don't recommend it. Um, but I do if you need it. Um, and during that – and I – also I couldn't play any musical instruments for the first 16 weeks. So it was also – and that's the longest I'd not played anything since I could. And so there was a lot of time to for better or worse look at myself objectively, um, and be talking to people who were helping. You know, there was lots of guidance and counselling and talking to other people in the centre. And, you know, you share a room in the centre so you're never necessarily alone. Um, which is a good thing and also a bad thing. Um, but yeah.

I just had to try and work out who I was or be alright with – and be alright with whatever I found. Um, and it just turns out that I was unhappy about a lot of things and there was some simple changes that I could make. And honestly being honest with yourself or being honest even to – to the point of things – like not even just the clothes but like the music. The kind of music that you like and being alright with telling people that, um, as opposed to having to be impressive all the time.

It's one thing if like that was just – that, I think, was the underlying thing. I felt like I needed to be impressive all the time. And it's like nobody is. And nobody should be. And what does that even mean? Like what does it even mean? Um, just like, 'are you happy with this, that, the other?'

And so at this – at this, uh, rehab centre, lots of people don't finish the programme because, like I said, it's rock hard. Um, so

there's this – there's lots of bags of just old clothes. So I got lots of hand me downs from people who'd been through – and it was all sorts. There was like – it was from like, you know, say like nice designer t-shirt to just whatever madness, you know, was like charity shop sort of vibes. And I wasn't like – I wasn't thinking so much because we were just busy doing, you know, either work – physical work or doing – I was working out or I was doing in the classes or, you know, it was a Christian rehab so I was like in church or whatever. So it – it wasn't about any of the razzle dazzle other stuff.

Um, in fact this – this guy Sammy who was the guy who interviewed me to go there, the way I – I dressed and just the way I held myself when I went into my interview, he said after I left, he told the staff, he was like, 'there's no way this guy's going to be told what to do. He's going to – like I bet he'll last a week. Like he –' because I came in with such swagger and just like how almost like I was like, 'I don't really need this, this is rubbish.' Like he just couldn't – he didn't – he couldn't believe that I stayed as long as I did and I – I completed it.

KIRI: Wow.

SEYE: Um, but he was just like, I just needed to drop a lot of that 'tude, um, and like just picking up bits of clothes from all these other people. Just again just psychologically just was something quite nice about not necessarily caring about what I was wearing so much. I mean and I – I did, you know, say sometimes, you know, put a – throw a fit together. Um, but it was only on special occasions or like when, you know, there was – when we went to church on Sundays, we went to church twice. Twice, Sunday morning, Sunday evening. And there was a strict dress code. You had to wear a suit and stuff like that.

So I was like, 'okay, this is an appropriate time to do it.' So, you know, hit Moss Bros, got a couple – couple banging whistles. Um, and there's something nice about that. So it's like, okay, now you're actually dressing up for something, you know? There's an occasion for it, there's a reason for it. You feel good about it. People say nice things, you know, because of it. As opposed to, 'oh, he's wearing another suit. Like bollocks.'

And not to say you should be wearing anything for compliments, but it's nice to get them. Um, and I think you're a fool if you think you just wear things just for yourself, because that's rubbish. Um, like yeah. So that's – that's when it sort of started and then – and post coming out, um, and like staying at my – I stayed at my parents' place for last past year as well, and I've only just recently moved – moved back to London and literally got a brand-new wardrobe. Physically. Like it's a new space to fill with clothes.

Um, so I've just been starting to amass new things again. And new rings. I had hundreds of rings as well which I either lost or gave away or have disappeared, um, and I'm just starting to amass new ones and new bits of clothing. All my hats were gone so I've got new hats coming back into my life and things are finding – flowing naturally back to me that I thought I lost, um, and again just not – well I've given up. I've given up sort of – not necessarily caring, but I opened up and I gave up a lot.

And actually the space is being filled, um, with good things. And, uh, that's – so that's emotionally, sort of mentally, um, as well as my actual wardrobe like just cool things. Cool things are coming to me or coming back to me or I'm forming great relationships with some great designers and – or picking up old ones that, um, are,

you know, being rekindled, you know, in a nice way. Um, and yeah.

And just not – and I'm also not spending. Because again it's really expensive wearing a, you know, new suit ever two, three weeks or something like that and wearing it – I'm not spending all my money on clothes anymore, um, because my priorities – because I mean your behaviour doesn't lie, which is a great phrase I learned in rehab, um, but it's true. It's like if I've – I'm not spending all my money on clothes because my priorities aren't just to look – look like I'm alright all the time. So it's like – now that I don't do that it's freed up a lot of actual space in my life.

KIRI: It's amazing because I hadn't, um, I guess when I'd associated – we've had loads of conversations on this podcast about people who have a really positive, uh, sort of relationship with clothing. And people who largely have had a negative one, it's been to do with the fact that like usually they're sort of plus size or they're queer people who are sort of non-binary. So, you know, the world hasn't built things for...

SEYE: For them.

KIRI: That fit them, necessarily. The world is making them feel like they're other. But your relationship with clothing becoming toxic in that – is – is so I guess new to me. And I think, um, while I do think you – it's been lovely that you've been so honest about it. And I – I'm sure there's other people who do that as well, who focus on having this level of perfection to sort of protect themselves from I guess people cottoning onto what's really going on.

SEYE: Yeah, it's – it's – I think it happens a lot in say my industry. Like being a musician where, you know, you are scrutinised a lot by how you look. And then also like say fans and stuff, like see – as long as they see that side of you, you're like, 'oh, it's alright. I'm doing my job.' Do you know what I mean? Um, 'doesn't really matter how I feel in the hotel room.' But like it's like, well actually it does.

Um, but yeah. It's a – it's a weird one. Um, and I love clothes. But I've – I definitely had a weird recent relationship where actually, you know, the clothes were wearing me. I wasn't wearing the clothes. I wasn't doing it for the right reasons. Um, and it's like yeah. You can – it's funny how humans like – we find a way – we can find a way of turning anything against us. Like especially things that you love. It's just like, wow, like something that I love ended up being a really big part of something that was potentially actually killing me.

KIRI: Being a musician as well, so you played with some like huge artists. And like so you're in Gorillaz obviously, and then you play with Paloma Faith as well. Part of me thinks like if you're on stage with her, you've got to have a look. Do you know what I mean?

SEYE: Yeah, like so she – like and she – she's one of my style icons, actually. Because she's also like – when we met back in like 2007 or something like that, um, I was – when I was auditioning for her, uh, we sort of clocked immediately that we were like kindred spirits. Because she's sort of flamboyant and sort of out there just like I am, um, and super stylist. Super cool. Um, and yeah.

There was something wicked about being on stage with someone that you almost felt like you had to one up. Um, even though she did eventually start putting up – like she told us what to wear or

started – started putting us in – in outfits, do you know what I mean? But initially it was a bit more sort of gung ho.

Um, but she's – she's definitely always been a great example of how to do it the right way, I'd say. I think like she's – she has – and I don't know, you'd have to ask her. I don't know how her relationship with clothing has evolved because, you know, she was very, she used to wear very different things when I first started hanging out with her to now, but she's always stayed the exact same the whole time. In the same way that with her music and with her, the way she is as a – as a person, you know, the house might be bigger but the girl's exactly the same. Um, she hasn't changed a bit.

Um, and yeah, she's – she's always been – she's always been there for me, actually. She tracked me down and – she didn't realise I was – I was in rehab, and she tracked down old phone numbers from mates and stuff and contacted to me in there. So big, big, big love to Paloma. She's a leg'.

KIRI: Oh, that's so nice to hear. She is ludicrously stylish. One day I dream of having her on this podcast. Fingers crossed.

SEYE: Oh yeah, big time.

[Upbeat electronic music]

KIRI: Do you think of hair and makeup as part of your outfit?

SEYE: Yeah, I mean, uh, my – I'm like – I've now got locs. Um, and I used to – I always had a – okay, I used to like – I've got a really small head. Um, my friend – a good friend of mine, Hannah Carrey, she calls me 'pea head', um, still, from like school. Um, it's

like really funny but we're really adults now. Um, but I've got big – I always have like or tend to have big hair or big hats in – initially it was just because I've got a like a tiny head so it always looked ridiculous – I always thought I looked ridiculous, you know?

Um, but now that I've got – I've got locs, like it's – it's its own accessory in a way. Like I think it looks – it looks cool down, it looks cool up, it looks cool literally when I just wake up and it's in all sorts of different shapes. Um, and I think – I mean my – my girlfriend Kaz, she's a – a hairstylist. And I didn't – it's such a deep subject, I – and like it really does change how someone feels and obviously how someone looks.

Because I think apparently when you recognise someone you look from the top down. So you see – you – you recognise the silhouette of someone's hair, like the shape of their head like with their hair before you actually –

KIRI: Wow.

SEYE: That's why they say when you – you see someone from behind that you think you recognise, you're certain for a second that it's them. You run up to them because your brain's just like, 'yeah, it must be that person.' It's just like, 'oh, no, that's not you.' Um, yeah, like hair's – hair's super important. And I've seen – I've seen – and to some of the stories, you know, my Kaz – Kaz makes a joke where she's like, when she's say at the salon or something like that, she's like – 'oh, I've just –' 'what have you been doing?' she's like, 'I've been making dreams come true.'

It's like a bit of a throwaway thing, but I know that there's some people that go in there, like especially after lockdown or something, some people, um, who've gone in feeling pretty bad

about themselves and after a decent cut and, you know, whatever colour, blowdry, bla bla bla, have come out feeling like a million bucks. Like there's just something – there is something about that, um, that can really, really change it.

And makeup as well. It's like, um, and again – which I guess is kind of a – can be a bit of a layered – no pun intended – subject. Um, but yeah, there's just something about sort of doing things to yourself to make you – to present yourself in a certain way that can – that makes you feel good, which I think – I think is great. And I don't think it should be sort of frowned upon to put things on to make yourself feel better. I think it's actually quite therapeutic.

KIRI: Yeah. Well on – speaking of putting things on, are there any trends that you have tried to pull off but it's just not happening for you?

SEYE: Tiktok. Um, no. Uh, yeah, it's not – it's just not for me. I've tried. I've tried. It's – I just can't do it. Um, um, okay. So I used to love a pair of winklepickers. So again going back to the sort of – the mid 2000s, um, indie band, you know –

KIRI: Razorlite shoes.

SEYE: Razor – like but like these were pointy. Like I had these – I had this pair of arctic white – and I've got big feet. Big feet, the skinniest of jeans, obviously, going back to this time. And yeah, these arctic white winklepickers that were just ridiculous. I've seen pictures of them now and I can't believe people let me walk around like that. But I was just trying loads of things. It was like, 'yeah.' Um, oh god. That was – that's probably one of the biggest

like blots on my record, I reckon. Yeah. The winkle – the winklepicker phase was not the phase.

KIRI: [laughs] When you kind of – when you went to rehab and Mum came down from the north and cleaned out the flat pretty much, is there anything that you held onto? I'm just wondering if you, you know, because I've got clothes that I've had since I was like 14 or 15 that I've just held onto.

SEYE: None of that. No.

KIRI: Wow.

SEYE: I don't have anything older than a couple of years, maybe. Growing up sort of moving around a lot, I'm – I'm alright with change. Like I don't get that attached to like things or places, really. I could live anywhere. I love London. It's my favourite, um, well it's – I think it's the best city in the world, not necessarily my favourite. But like there's nowhere else I'd rather be. Um, like I have a great life here. My missus is here. But if she was like or we were like, 'let's move tomorrow,' I could do it. Literally I could – I could live anywhere. And if it was like, 'oh, you – but you can only bring one bag,' I'd be like, 'alright,' and just like get rid of half my stuff.

KIRI: Wow.

SEYE: Like I have – I've got no – no problem with that. Um, I find it refreshing. Um, or I think it can be. But that's also – that also could be because I also – I've – I've also never really imbued maybe enough value in some things like, um, maybe I just didn't have anything that I thought was worth keeping, um, whereas there's a few bits I've got now where I'm just like, 'oh, I'm going

to take really good care of that and I want to hold onto that for a while and, you know, um, I want to look after it and, uh, it'll be cool to see what this jacket looks like in a few years' time when it's been around, you know?' Um, but before I was very fleeting with things. Uh, just not – half because I didn't necessarily respect it, um, I was quite sort of wasteful. Um, but then there's also – which I think is a good thing to have is that I'm not that attached to stuff. Like because I just – I just know new things will come through. Always do.

KIRI: You're the complete opposite to me and I'm a chronic hoarder. Just sit on the stuff as long as I can. Being like even if it doesn't fit or has never fitted, I'm like, 'it – it just deserves to live with me.'

SEYE: 'It will.' Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

KIRI: So what's the oldest item of clothing you've got, then? Because you've got some vintage stuff, right?

SEYE: Not really at the moment. The oldest – the old things I've got are guitars as opposed to clothes, you know? Um, like my oldest guitar is like 1928.

KIRI: Wow.

SEYE: Um, and I don't actually know where it is right now. That's – that's where I'm – that's where I was in my life. Actually I think I know. It's at my friend's studio and I just haven't claimed it back yet. Um, but yeah. I've – I have had a whole bunch of vintage stuff and vintage suits and, uh, but I think right now I don't think I've got much if any vintage stuff going on.

KIRI: Wow.

SEYE: But again it's – that's – I'm alright with that. Because at one point I was just like, 'oh, it's got to be – if I'm getting this, it's got to be a vintage this.' And it's just like, 'it's got to be, it's got to be. It's got to be designer this.' It's like nah. My – my wardrobe is – ranges from, you know, Asos, Primark, you know, £2 things to, you know, I've got a leather jacket that costs like four figures, do you know what I mean?

KIRI: My god.

SEYE: I got it for three because I've got links. Um, but it's like – it's – that's – that's the spectrum and I'm alright with that spectrum. And I think that makes – that actually is – that actually encompasses me way more than just thinking on the higher end of things.

KIRI: Is there an era that you wish that you existed in just – just for the fashion? Of how great the looks are.

SEYE: Okay, good. I'm glad you qualified that because I would – like before the 80s? No. Um, not really, um.

[Kiri laughs]

SEYE: But, uh, for fashion, I mean, I do like a – like a good zoot suit. So like yeah, like 30s is a good – good time. I do – I do like the age where people, you know, where you wore – again, you wore a suit as like – that was just a – the – the gentleman's wear. It's just like what – it's what people wore, um, as opposed to it being a statement or bla bla bla. Even though, you know, there were levels of suits. But it's like a working class man wore a suit and a

hat, a – a prime minister wore a suit and a hat. Um, yeah. That's a – that's a pretty – pretty cool time, I'd say.

KIRI: That's a great answer. Is there an item of clothing – and it can be like a specific item like your leather jacket or just a type of clothing like a hat, that you just put on and you instantly feel great?

SEYE: These Doc Martens. These – these Jadon. These big platform DMs that work with absolutely anything that I wear. And it's like no matter what I'm wearing, like just pop them on and it's like, 'oh, that's alright.' Um, sort of looks – looks pretty cool. Um, so yeah, that – that puts my sort of outfit at ease.

And you'd be surprised at how often that does like – my flatmate Alicia, she's just got these – I think they're – are they Gucci? They're like the – they brought out these plastic like sandals, basically. Like they're basically like the gel – like gel shoes but for way too much money. Um, but they're – but she's got these black ones that look amazing. And like they – like they just immediately turn like her just walking to the kitchen into, 'oh, she's suddenly on the catwalk.' It's like – it's – having a – a dope shoe can really – can – can sort out the rest of the look. You don't really need to do much else. Just sort your barnet out and then you can go out the door.

KIRI: Yeah. Yeah, shoes can do a lot of talking, can't they? For the rest of the outfit.

SEYE: 100%. 100%. You don't need to do – you don't need to say that much else if you've got a banging pair like of creps. Like you can just be a – a bit simpler otherwise and then, you know, maybe pop – pop a ring on, pop a watch on, you're alright.

[Upbeat electronic music]

KIRI: What's your relationship with charity shops and like thrifting and – and vintage shops? Is that something you enjoy?

SEYE: Yeah, I do. I think it's part of a healthy sort of shopping life, I think, is to – like I'm into recycling things and, um, yeah. And I definitely think there's something cool about an item of clothing or like a pair of shoes or something like that – especially shoes, there is something about – even though it's weird wearing someone else's shoes, but I think just there's something cool about a story carrying on, um, like it's such a literally grounding thing to wear someone else's – put – walk a mile in someone else's shoes or you literally can do that. Um, and yeah.

No, I like doing it, um, I live near a couple decent, uh, charity shops. There's a good Crisis one just up the road here in Peckham. Uh, yeah. I think that's, uh, it's a good way – good way to do things. But, you know, it's hit and miss, isn't it? So you can't necessarily – you don't know what you're going to get, um, there's something nice about that.

KIRI: Yeah, what's the best thing you've ever got from a charity shop, then?

SEYE: My favourite thing is to get are just like rings. Accessories are always – there's always just a mad bundle of stuff. Like it could be, you know, some really nice piece from like the 50s or something like that, but then it could just be something found in a – like a kids lollipop or something like that. Um, but there's just like – I think that's just – that's probably my most – the thing I buy

the most is probably accessories. Just like bangles and necklaces and, um, yeah, things like that.

KIRI: They're so great as well. Because I remember as a kid – like a teenager, and maybe about the time I started working, but I was like a washer upper and I was on £3.50 an hour. So I wasn't like rich, but you could go to a charity shop and get like loads of like jewellery.

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: And in – at the time like plastic beads were in fashion and they were just in every charity shop there was like a box of them. Because years ago nanas wore them.

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: So, you know, you could suddenly – like in my case, anyway, I could suddenly look like I was more on trend with a lot less money. And that kind of stuff's important when you're a kid.

SEYE: Yeah, that's it. Like I definitely encourage young people like kids, um, with like their first bit of money, or parents like – like encourage your kids to – take them to like a charity shop or something like that so you can get – because the pressure to look cool, especially in an age where like again people are like Tiktoking and, uh, like livestreaming from class, um, like, you know, the pressure to look cool is so high. But it's like, oh, you could probably – you can look really individual and look cool for not that much if you try some charity shops. Like independent charity shops and even some chain charity shops. But like some places, like a Beyond Retro, can be actually quite expensive.

KIRI: Yeah. Yeah, totally. I agree. And also it takes the joy out of it. Like at a charity shop I want to discover the thing and then I feel like I get the reward. I don't need – that's why I don't like Oxfam originals. I'm like, someone's already done the fun job of sifting through to find the gems.

SEYE: Yeah. The only – you're right. The part – part of it, it's the – it's the exploration that's part of it, isn't it?

KIRI: Yeah. Definitely. Yeah. Um, so your style how it is now, can you see – can you see you in your like 70s in your like platform Docs with your leather jacket? Or you think you're going to change again and evolve?

SEYE: It's going to constantly change. I've got no idea what's going to – like my feet might not be able to take them Docs, like just from years of wearing them. Like they might be knackered and, you know, jumping around on stage and stuff, you know? Probably – I'll probably be into really flat shoes if any shoes. I don't know where I'm going to be with my life. Might just like put some spray hardening on the – on the bottom and just like trek about wearing hemp. Um, I don't – I have no idea but I – I'm open to whatever. I'm – I'm also open to yeah, to still be wearing, you know, a pair of DMS and – or a pair of Converse and, uh, seeing what happens.

But I'm – I'm definitely one of these – I – I – no, I don't want to be one of these people who's wearing the same stuff that they wore when they were, you know, a teenager or, uh, like in their 20s, which I just think is sad. Or one of those like – or a middle aged man who – which I see a lot in the music industry, like a middle aged man who's dressed like a 20 year old. Um, quite specifically

because – like who’s so on trend quite specifically to be relevant. And it’s like, ‘you’re not, bruv.’

KIRI: Ugh.

SEYE: Yeah, it’s really – it’s really, really gross. Like going out with a really young girl. It’s like, ‘oh, come on, man. Like –

KIRI: Yeah, what’s going on there? There’s all sorts of alarm bells ringing.

SEYE: There’s a lot. A lot. I can’t hear because there’s so many bells going on. Like oh my lord. Can you turn it down please?

KIRI: [Kiri laughs] Is there an item of clothing like again a specific item or just a type of clothing you can always see yourself wearing?

SEYE: Like hats I can always see rocking. Whether I stay with this hair, you know, forever, which I feel like locs are something that can just stay, you know? They can be a – they’re a good look no matter what age you are. I think that’s – that’s strong. Um, but yeah, I can see myself always having some sort of assortment of hats. Um, but – but everything, like I said, everything else is fair game. Um, I might lose all my stuff soon for – because of whatever but, um, I might gain a lot more for whatever. But, um, yeah, I’d quite like to keep a decent collection of hats.

KIRI: I love it. I love how zen you are about stuff as well. I’m just looking around. I – I record this in my walk-in wardrobe because the sound’s nice and damp, and it’s literally – because I tidied my room and threw all the clothes in here – it’s like I’m sat on the floor but it’s like shoulder high all around me.

SEYE: Wow.

KIRI: You're like, 'yeah, things can come and go,' and I'm like, 'I've had that since I was 14, I've had that since I was 18.' I wish I could be like you.

SEYE: Wow. I almost – I mean there's also like part of me that wishes I still had like some of those bits like from when I was a kid. It might be – it would be quite nice to say have my trucker hat from like Auto Fed's first gig or, you know, um, stuff like that. But yeah, I'm also quite alright with not. It's like I'll just make new – new memories, it's alright.

KIRI: Um, are there any trends that you're hoping never come back?

SEYE: No, because it's like I'd like to see some things have another go but having been evolved like and see if it works again. Like, you know, shoulder pads in the 80s didn't – weren't necessarily that cool but a lot of designers have brought them back and like have worked it out. It's like, 'okay, the first draft didn't really work, but alright, let's have another crack at it.' Um, yeah. I think everything – everything can work. Um, it's just the – it's just the approach and who – in whose hands it is. It's like it's had a – a lot of things just need a bit of time to have a go around and, you know, be approached with like modern – modern technology or a modern – modern outlook on things.

KIRI: You're so right. There's so much stuff that in the 80s I was like, 'oh, the proportions aren't right.' And a version of it has come back and I'm like, 'that's it.'

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: That's the – that's the distilled version.

SEYE: Like even – like even like jeans. Like jeans, you know, high-waisted like mum – mum jeans. Like but they're – it's a great look but now that the materials aren't shit and someone who actually designs clothes has made them, like it's not just the utilitarian cut one – just one size fits everybody. It's just like, 'okay, these can actually look like and accentuate great parts of the body.' And, you know, you can wear them with confidence. Like the whole sort of dad look, mum look I think has been a triumph of the modern era.

Not – not people who are just like hype beasts who just wear like clumpy shoes and whatever the – I hate – I hate any like say when like Balenciaga brought out the socks – like the sock shoes and stuff and like how everybody wore a sock shoe. It's like that I'm not for. Like just wearing everything the minute it comes out if it's like – because it's got Kanye on it or whatever. Like I can't really stand any of his shoes, but like, um, that I'm not into.

But I am into the idea of how especially with younger people, especially younger women, it's like – it's not all about the – the lowest cut jeans, um, and no tops, do you know what I mean? It's like you can cover up, like say someone like Billie Eilish, um, completely and look super hot and look super cool. It's given more people a chance to look cool. Um, I think that's, uh, that's one of the best things about modern – the modern trends at the minute.

KIRI: Yeah, it feels like a much broader church than it did when we were growing up.

SEYE: Exactly. 100%. Like it was such a – I don't know. Especially with just like the way society looked at women's fashion, I think was like – I can't believe it's – it's so different now compared to like the early 2000s and stuff. It's a completely –

KIRI: Yeah, and I feel like in terms of gender as well. Like growing up it was like tracksuits with Playboy on and lots of pink and lots of that kind of stuff. And really sexualised for women.

SEYE: Yeah.

KIRI: And I don't even know what the boys were wearing. I think we were still in the idea that boys didn't care about what they wore. There were no David Bowies who were playing with all that kind of stuff.

SEYE: Well the only person who did was David Beckham.

KIRI: Oh, yeah.

SEYE: So like he was the – he was pushing stuff like – remember how it was – it was front-page news that he wore a sarong?

KIRI: The sarong, yeah.

SEYE: Like what? And like, you know, maybe beads or put some product in his hair. And it's just like as if. Like that was – that's how barren like the sort of media sort of sexualisation of – like conversation was. It was like – it was pretty binary. Um, and say what you want to say about the whole how gender – about gender fluidity, bla bla, it – but what – one positive thing is just

like that everybody gets a – more people get a – get a chance these days. Um, and I'm – I'm for that.

KIRI: Yeah, absolutely. Final question now. Um, it could be perceived as a bit sad, but I see it as a celebration. Um, so what outfit would you like to be buried in?

SEYE: That is a really good question. Wow. Um, woah. That's – that's thrown me for six.

KIRI: It's a big one, isn't it? It's a big one.

SEYE: It is a – it's a big one.

KIRI: When I was talking to Darren the other day, he said something really interesting. He said – he was like, 'oh, I've just found out this difference.' He said, 'most of my – most of my white friends, they have, um, if there – if there is an open casket, it's only up to the waist.' He was like, 'all the black funerals I've been to, you can see the whole outfit.' So he's like, 'I have to think about the shoes as well.' So he's like, 'I have to think about everything.'

SEYE: You know what? The first thought I did have, it went to shoes, though. That's where I went to first. I was like, 'oh, if I wore platforms it might have to be a slightly bigger casket.' Um, I think – I probably think I'd want to go out in – I don't know what I'd wear, but it'd probably be the most ridiculous like – I'd want to be – go to the nth degree of wear the most – like amazing thing I possibly own. It'll probably end up being some form of – I don't know what clothes are going to be even made of when this potentially happens. Um, yeah. Like some sort of mad, yeah, crazy

suit with a pair of like – at the moment I can just see a cool pair of like platform boots on. Um, with a hat resting on me chest.

KIRI: Oh, yes please.

SEYE: Yeah. I think something like that could be – could be the one. Rings on every finger.

KIRI: Love it. Absolutely love it. Um, we've sort of come to the end now. It's been so, so interesting speaking to you. And you've been so gorgeously open about everything. Um, is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you – you feel like mentioning?

SEYE: Um, well number one, thank you for having me. It's been –

KIRI: Pleasure.

SEYE: It's been a really nice chat. We've gone lots of places I didn't really expect. Um, I will just say that, uh, to everybody out there, like no matter who you are, if you need some help just, you know, ask. Get some help. You've got people that potentially love you, or if you don't feel like you do there's people you can – there's numbers you can call.

There's – especially for blokes. Like check out Boys Get Sad Too, um, because they do a lot of work with helping men talk about these things. Um, and One For The Boys as well. Those guys as well. Like trying to get the conversation going and get people talking about their mental health.

Um, but – and, you know, these things can often get tied into addiction issues. So, um, I'm not saying, you know, you need to quit doing whatever you're doing, but if you're thinking about,

‘oh, I probably do this too much,’ or, ‘I’m thinking of quitting,’ you probably should. Um, so start the – start the process now, I’d say. Because you will not – you’ll not regret it. And it’s – it’s not easy, but it’s worth it.

KIRI: That’s, um, well you’re a gorgeous example of someone who’s worked so hard and had the support and the help and has come through the other side, which is, um, I think a – a lovely thing to see. And I think you’re right in talking about, you know, the fact that men – we don’t equip men with the space and tools to talk about their feelings, and often lots of them do self-medicate with other things. So I think you’re so right that they can go hand in hand together.

SEYE: Again it’s just I – I think the whole idea of – of fashion, how important clothes and stuff actually can be to your mental wellbeing and the way you express that. It’s again, I think it’s something that – it’s not that – it’s not that often it’s spoken about. So I think it’s – it’s been really beneficial. It’s been beneficial for me even just thinking about these things.

[Upbeat electronic music]

KIRI: Wow, what an interesting, smart, and open guy Seye is. I really hope you got as much out of that chat as I did. And if anything that Seye has said has resonated with you about getting help, we’ve got some links in the episode notes for you.

Um, got some great messages here. Thank you so much for sending messages. It’s such a nice, thoughtful thing to do. You can always email us as well at whoareyouwearingpod@gmail.com.

Um, got a message on the Instagram here from Becca who said, 'hey, I just wanted to say me and my mate are loving the podcast. All the episodes have been ace so far, especially the Susan Wokoma and Joe Black eps. I listen on Spotify. I'm going to – 'oh, love her. She says, 'I listen on Spotify but I'll try and work out how to do the five star review thing.' Thank you so much. And loads of you have been doing that and it's helped people find us and helped us get on the 'New and Noteworthy' little wheel thing on, um, iTunes, which has helped a load more people come and find us. So hi, if you're a new listener you are so, so welcome.

Love this message that we got from Jay on Instagram. They say, 'this is the best, most tantalising, slow reveal social account complimenting a podcast. I listen, then I await the little visual treats later on. Perfect.' I'm so glad you like it because I do have a big think about what goes out when. Um, because also I keep – some of these conversations are so sort of big and profound and jam packed. Like we talk about so much that I sort of – even though I listen to obviously the episode a couple of times, I forget and then I'm like, 'oh, I've got this picture from here and I'll put that here and there's' – another chat starts about, you know, what we used to wear as teenagers or mad hairstyles or whatever. I absolutely love it and I'm glad that you like it as well.

You're in for a real treat actually this week, Jay, because Seye has got some absolute looks to serve. God, that man can really carry off a hat.

Um, speaking of, I would love to shout out about a small business that I adore, if I may. I'm going to be banging on about Madog Millinery. Okay, so this is run by Erin. It is a small business in Wales. She's from North Wales originally but is now based in Cardiff, where she makes all her headpieces, embroidery, and

accessories by hand. She's on maternity leave at the moment, um, but she also makes custom pieces, so do remember that.

Her background is in costume making for stage and I really think that comes through in her work in the – in the best possible way. And so much so. I really want to write a play just so I can insist that someone wears one of her pillbox hats in it. I actually got a beautiful pink velvet headband of hers from another small business I love, um, a gorgeous shop called Lotti and Wren who do online orders.

I honestly feel like an actual Disney princess in that headband. Don't know what it is, um, but I'm absolutely here for it. Um, it's really well made as well so I cannot wait to wear it when I'm a nana, um, just slide it over my platinum bob. I'm going to have a big dark streak of hair in it. The opposite to what I have got now. Yeah, that is right. I've planned for when I get older. How I want my hair to be a photo negative of what I have now.

[Upbeat electronic music]

Well thank you so much for listening to this podcast and to all of you who've given it a big push and shared it too. It is so kind of you. I am back next week with the colour riot and the queen of interior design masters, Siobhan Murphy. See you then.

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