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He's a real charmer now, isn't he?

James Blunt Goes from Bedlam in Search of Lost Souls

Before the release of his new album, Blunt talks about fame and finding himself

James Blunt is a highly atypical male star. The former Household Cavalry officer who is now based in Ibiza does his best to avoid media attention and tries to act pretty much as an ordinary guy would. Only unfortunately for him, he's one of Britain's top selling artists and a bit of a heartache for the ladies, an extraordinarily talented guy and one of the voices most heard on the radio everywhere. To go a bit down on the personal side of things here, I admit the first time I listened to his "Goodbye My Lover" shortly before Christmas two years ago I thought there could be no better pop artist in the whole wide world. But that may be just because I'm a girl and a sucker for a good

relationship-doomsday-song-that-makes-you-think-back and all the other clichés wrapped up together. But Blunt has managed to stay well away from clichés and keep his sound authentic, enticing, fresh if the case, retro at some points but complex and intricately woven all at the same time. And although his lifestyle has changed and he's met and done a lot more over the past three and a half years than he's ever done in his life, James Blunt has not become self-consciously arrogant and he does not disappoint. His new album, "All Lost Souls", is again a mixture of styles and sounds that come all the way from the 70's mixed with some trademark introspective pop, blues and rock. The first single released from the album is called "1973" and tells us of a wonderfully detached Blunt that has managed to add more of the same ingredients that made him famous in the first place into a new, improved mix. The singer admits to feeling some pressure from the public on living up to the staggering 12 million copies which his first album, "Back to Bedlam" sold. He's cut himself off from the rest of the world in order to work on his new album quietly. "When I was recording the new album I was just on my own in Ibiza in the winter. I mixed with locals, went to tapas bars. It was really amazing being totally separate from the music industry, the media world and the roller coaster of fame. I just felt like I was very human again". Blunt is not your typically average "I want to break as many hearts as possible with the same ol' lyrics" guy, and neither does he take himself completely seriously. His recent fame and the attention he's been getting have made him gain a stronger sense of self and he's happy to admit that, although being a superstar is not that bad, there are ways of putting everything into perspective and fortunately all that is done for the benefit of his fans. "There's a song on the new album, 'One Of The Brightest Stars', which is about dealing with all that. It's like I am an observer, I'm seeing it all and experiencing it for its good bits and all the rest. And yeah, of course, there are some benefits along the way". Well, of course there are, but quality comes before all and James Blunt has enough of that to last us a lifetime.