

Music in style with Michael Neill

By  Martin Myers

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Singer Michael Neill has just released his debut single and music video for *All of You*.



Image supplied: Michael Neill

“I am beyond thrilled and excited to finally be releasing my own music. I feel like I have been waiting for this moment all my life and really hope everyone likes my first single. I met a wonderful German producer who was on holiday in Cape Town this year and we began playing around with some of my songs and ‘All of You’ was the first song we did a demo for, so it naturally became the first one to be ready for release,” Neill said.

After five years of travelling, Neill returned to South Africa with great ambitions to finally start his professional music career and focus on his passions

Unfortunately, the 2020 lockdown and Covid-19 shut down the entire world and much like everyone else, Michael was forced to put things on hold to a certain degree, once again. However, during this time, he began working on his second passion and dream project - Michael Neill Apparel.

Michael Neill Apparel was designed and founded during the pandemic and currently has several retail outlets in South Africa just a short year after its launch.



As the world slowly opened up during lockdown, his musical plans were swiftly put back into place. A key feature of Neill as an artist is his fearlessness: not just as a singer/ songwriter but also as an entertainer/performer.

Speaking about the writing process and inspiration for his debut *All of You*, Neill explains “I usually don’t know when I am going to write a song, it happens very spontaneously. I remember sitting with my guitar in December 2021 while a friend and I were chatting with a glass of wine and the very first verse just came out of nowhere and I began to write it down on paper. I left it for a month before I proceeded to complete it. The inspiration for the song is self-explanatory in a way but it speaks about revealing one’s true feelings towards someone they have known for some time, who may feel the same but it’s been unspoken, and it’s about letting them know exactly how you feel.”

I caught up with Michael last week...

■ ***What is your job description?***

I am a singer/artist and the creative director for my apparel brand.

■ ***What does music mean to you?***

Everything

■ ***My music is about...***

Love and autobiographical experiences

■ ***What is your motto?***

Do it and don’t look back

■ ***Fame is about...***

Being recognised globally for my talent and my music.

■ ***Retirement will happen when...***

My family buys my coffin

■ ***I would love to co-write with...***

Harry Styles

■ ***Where do you go for inspiration to create?***

It’s all around me all the time, I stay inspired.

■ ***What is the most enjoyable aspect of your work?***

Performing on stage.

■ ***The song you must do during every show?***

My latest single, *All of You*

■ ***Any funny moments on stage?***

Dropping a very large and heavy microphone on my big toe. I hit a very high note immediately.

■ ***My heroes are...***

Oprah Winfrey, Celine Dion, Whitney Houston, Freddie Mercury and my mom.

■ ***My style icon is...***

I own my own brand, Michael Neill Apparel - and this is my own iconic style. The best is yet to come...

■ ***Which living person do you admire most and why?***

At this very moment, Austin Butler for his phenomenal performance in *Elvis*. The devotion and discipline he has for his craft is something I truly admire.

■ ***What is your most treasured possession?***

My sense of humour

■ ***It's your round; what are you drinking?***

A glass of Merlot

■ ***Dream gig to do?***

Las Vegas Residency

■ ***What makes you stand out?***

Being authentically myself and, according to others, my personality.

📺 **Any nicknames?**

Mikey

📺 **If you were not a musician, what would you do?**

Comedian/actor

📺 **Pick five words to describe yourself?**

Funny, emotional, resilient, strong, multi-talented

📺 **What are you streaming?**

Umbrella Academy

📺 **What book are you reading?**

The Path Made Clear by Oprah Winfrey

📺 **What song changed your life?**

Bob Marley – *Everything's Gonna Be Alright*

📺 **Who do you love?**

My mom

📺 **What is your favourite word?**

Yes

📺 **Top of your bucket list?**

Having a no 1 album



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📺 **Your greatest achievement?**

Learning to believe in myself

📺 **What do you complain about most often?**

Loadshedding

📺 **What is your biggest fear?**

Spiders

📺 **Happiness is...**

A moment in time (when I'm on stage, hence the Las Vegas residency)

■ ***On stage, I tend to...***

Be a showman

■ ***The best life lesson you have learned?***

Stop worrying about what everybody else thinks because they are probably not thinking about me anyway.

■ ***What has been your favourite journey so far?***

The last year of my life and returning to the music industry

■ ***Do you do charity work, and if you do – what do you do?***

I would love to do a lot more, particularly with an organisation such as World Hunger. That said, my clothing business does donate clothing at Christmas time to charities.

■ ***Wishes and dreams?***

To always be the best of myself and to find a way to always positively impact others' lives.

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ABOUT MARTIN MYERS

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