

5

Eurovision entry

EURO IN FOR A SHOCK?

MOLLY SMITTEN-DOWNES will fly the UK flag in Copenhagen next week with her song *Children Of The Universe*. From Leicestershire, the 27 year old had a Top 10 hit in 2008 with *Raindrops (Encore Une Fois)*, but is now hoping for solo success. Will Eurovision help or hinder?

We've never heard of you before...

I've been involved in the music industry for years. I did some dance stuff, but four years ago I stepped away from that to focus on the music I really wanted to do. The downside of that is I have to pay bills, so I worked in Topshop for 18 months until February.

How did you get the Eurovision gig?

I was uploading my music to BBC Introducing, a platform for undiscovered artists. Then the Eurovision Executive Producer heard it and got in touch to ask if I'd have a go at writing something.

Did you have reservations about Eurovision?

At first I said no, it isn't for me. But they persuaded me to come in for a chat. It became apparent they wanted to do something new and they didn't want a household name. I did a U-turn and started thinking, 'S**t I've got to do this.'

But it's so political - no one votes for the UK...

I've heard people say it's political, but looking back at the previous winners and our

entries, you can see why we've not won. They're good songs, they're just not contemporary. I'm just hoping the best song wins and not politics. Ask me again on May 11th and I might be really bitter saying it's all politics, they hate us!

You've written your song, and you're singing it. You'll have to grow a thick skin.

It's a double whammy of 'You're s**t' if I get nil point. The only thing I can do is believe in what I'm doing and take the criticism. If everyone gives me nil point I'll be gutted. But I'm not under the illusion everybody will like it.

What's your song about?

It's quite deep, are you ready? You might need a few wines! It's about feeling worthless and not feeling like you have a point, but then realising you're fundamental

to everything and we all have a purpose - we're all children of the universe. Sometimes you need faith that things will get better and that is what the song is inspired by. See, I told you - deep!

NB: The Eurovision Song Contest is on Saturday night, BBC1, 8pm. Molly's single *Children Of The Universe* is out now

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6 **150 NOT OUT...**

Iconic shop



John Lewis is 150 years old this weekend - that must mean they'll get one and a half telegrams from the Queen, surely? To celebrate, there'll be plenty of their classic retro stuff from way back (in store and online), and London's Oxford Street store will have an exhibition to mark the occasion. Happy birthday JL!

NB: www.johnlewis.com/john-lewis-150-years

Dress like a deckchair

Line up, line up, the iconic British brand Fred Perry has joined forces with Southsea Deckchairs to showcase a striking fashion collection inspired by the classic striped seaside seat. So wear your stripes proudly, and you can even order a deckchair to match your ensemble. Snazzy.

7

Stripey style



Words: Rachael Corcoran. Pictures: Getty.

NB: Fred Perry range available from Fredperry.com. Southsea Deckchairs available from Deckchairs.co.uk