



Arthur 'struggles' to get noticed by award shows

James Arthur thinks it's "struggle" for him to get noticed by award shows. The 31-year-old singer has been in the spotlight since he was crowned champion of singing competition 'The X Factor' back in 2012, and although he's been nominated twice for Single of the Year at the annual BRIT Awards, he's never taken the accolade home. And now, James has said that while he knows winning the show and having a successful career are "huge achievements", he does think he gets overlooked at award shows. Speaking to The Sun newspaper's Bizarre column, he said: "I won 'The

X Factor' six years ago and to still be having hits, I have to remind myself what a huge achievement that is. When you look at the record of people from that show, especially males, I'm proud of how far I've come. "But then there's a real competitive side to me that wants to be up there and given the accolades that some of the other guys are, I feel like it's more of a struggle for me sometimes, maybe because of where I came from." Meanwhile, James could've had an award winning album on his hands when he created a record full of dance tracks, but revealed last year he was scrapping the songs because they were

"too carried away" from the sound people have come to know and love him for. He said at the time: "I made an album full of bangers. I put out You Deserve Better, which I thought was going to sit on the radio and everyone was going to love it. "It's a great song but I got too carried away from what people really like about me. So I went back to that and kind of evolved it and made it more interesting."

Charli XCX 'went all in' on new album

Charli XCX "really went all in" on her new album. The 26-year-old singer dropping her new single 'Blame It on Your Love' featuring Lizzo earlier this month, which marked her first new solo material since her stand-alone collaboration with Troye Sivan, '1999', which she released last year. And after having teased her third full-length LP following the release of two mixtapes - 'Number 1 Angel' and 'Pop 2' - in 2017, Charli has revealed what fans can expect from the new music. She said: "I didn't go small on this, I really went all in. Maybe too in, so I really wanna prep people. Since the mixtapes, I've really wanted to push my sound and push pop as far as it can go. I feel really proud of the music that I've made, so I really want the songs to have as much of a moment individually as possible." The 'Boys' hitmaker admits there are plenty of "experimental moments" on her new record, as she teamed up with some "really great producers". She added: "There are definitely lots of more experimental moments. I've been working with some really great producers from A. G. Cook to Nomack, who is really incredible at sound design. There are a lot of harder moments on the record compared to really stripped-back things." And Charli says she didn't take "a lot of time" on the new LP, because she believes she makes "better" music "under a time pressure". Speaking to NME magazine, she said: "The album [has] definitely been quite a [quick process]. I don't really like taking a lot of time. I spent a little bit more time but it is very rapid fire - I like to be very spontaneous with the decisions I make around my music. So for me, if I'm under a time pressure the music's better. First instinct only, always. I think that's the best."



Blunt says next album will be saddest yet

James Blunt says his next album is going to be his saddest yet because "misery sells". The 45-year-old musician is known for his melancholy tracks and he insists his sixth studio LP - the follow-up to 2017's album 'The Afterlove' - will have even more miserable music because some of his lyrics are inspired by bereavements he has suffered in his life. Speaking to BANG Showbiz, he said: "I am a musician and I'm writing songs, so watch this space. I've just come off 18 months on the road so I've just washed my clothes and I'm back in the studio. "Misery sells and I know a few people that have died, and a few have been born, so I'm writing about those." James - who has just bought a pub - has started the recording process and he's having a "really good time" recording as he has stuff things he wants to write about. He said: "I am in the studio. I'm having a really good time. I

have stuff to write about. I've just bought a pub as well. It's called The Fox & Pheasant, right by Chelsea Football Club." James released his debut album 'Back To Bedlam' in 2004. He then released 'All The Lost Souls' in 2007, 'Some Kind of Trouble' in 2010 and 'Moon Landing' in 2013 before having a four-year break. The 'Goodbye My Lover' hitmaker has previously said that being "locked away" from his family as a youngster at boarding school has been a source of inspiration for his songs. James - who was at boarding school from the age of seven - said: "Being sent away to boarding school at seven is as great an inspiration as any songwriter could have - to be taken away from one's family and locked away for 10 years. It does create an incredible intensity of emotion."



Wiley says Stormzy is an inspiration

Wiley considers Stormzy to be a "new inspiration". The 40-year-old rapper - who is widely known as the Godfather of Grime - has admitted to being inspired by the London-born MC, who is now one of the best-selling artists in the UK. The veteran star said: "Stormzy is my new inspiration. He's younger than me but he's the one who'll keep it going on. I've nothing but respect for him. "Maybe there was a time when I put out a project and earned a bit of extra money because he was bigging me up. I wasn't asking for that. It's not about money, but the way that he showed respect really helped me to go on." Wiley also revealed he's made a concerted effort to remain close to his roots, despite enjoying a lengthy and lucrative career in the music business. He told NME: "To keep grounded, I remember that I'm a youth club kid. "I came from there onto pirate radio. I didn't go straight into the music industry and 17 and become a child star. I don't know where they've all gone recently, but they



were good for us. I don't know how it goes with the youth club stuff for the generation today. "The ones I went to might have shut down, but the people who run youth clubs are great. They just want the best for you, and they're not your mum or dad. That's amazing."

Ashcroft will 'definitely' make music with Gallagher

Richard Ashcroft "definitely" plans to record music with his pal Liam Gallagher. The former Verve frontman supported the 'Wall of Glass' hitmaker at a string of concerts around the globe last year - including making a surprise appearance at Liam's mammoth gig in London's Finsbury Park in June - and has now said they "100 percent intend" to make music together. Speaking at the Ivor Novello Awards last Thursday he said: "I know sometime in the future we definitely 100 percent intend to do songs together. "I don't believe any songs on this record but I'm excited about it, I'm excited for him, he's a good friend of mine. We're one of the few people that's on that level as a frontman." Richard, 47, went on to insist that he has no plans to stop making music anytime soon as he "loves performing live" and said that it's only when he isn't "physically" able that he'll

stop putting on shows for his fans. The 'Bitter Sweet Symphony' hitmaker added: "It's only physicality that will stop me adding that desire to explore music to my fans and enjoy this gift I've been given. "I'm aware that just as many people who like me, don't like me and once you're comfortable with that you're never going to please the whole world musically. "That's just the ying and yang and the balance of life. That's a kick, to be negative gives people a kick now, from a younger person starting out, it's much easier to get someone else's work and say 'I'll sing that blame him!' "There's no one to blame so you take on that responsibility, you better believe you're taking on all that. "I love performing live. My voice is better, I have a much stronger voice now than I had, I sound like a child back then."



JADE BIRD 'POWER-DRESSES' ON STAGE

Jade Bird likes to "power-dress" when she is on stage. The 21-year-old singer is known for wearing a signature jumpsuit to complete her stage persona, and she has now revealed that she identifies with wearing the stylish all-in-one garment because it makes her feel "good" and she doesn't have to worry about "tucking anything in". Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz, Jade said: "The jumpsuit was like power-dressing, I always wore skirts when I first played when I was 14 and it was cool but I never felt any identity with what I was wearing. "A jumpsuit for me was a way of feeling comfortable, I don't have to tuck anything in and I can just roll it in my suitcase, so it just became I really loved to wear and feel safe wearing and feel confident wearing. It doesn't matter what situation you're in, when you wear something you feel good in - you're fine. I never really associate with clothes or fashion but I'm learning!" And the 'My Motto' hitmaker - who released her eponymous debut album in April - opened up about her signature sound, and explained that she would "practice" endlessly to make her voice "stronger" and "grittier" after she was influenced by male blues singers at a local bar. She added: "I [can be] very shouty. I think I grew more

confident and I was listening to a lot of blues singers. "So when I moved to London at 16, I played at this bar called Number Four Ferdinand Street and it's a spiritual bar in Camden so I watched all these burly men sing with big gruffly voices and I thought, 'I want to be heard on a Saturday night and a Sunday night too.' "So I just practiced and practiced and started singing with my grit and it just stretched me and made my voice stronger." And Jade insisted that her own music is influenced by the riot grrrl movement - an underground feminist punk movement that began early on in the '90s - to help her "aggression" on stage. She added: "I'm not a calm human being, not 90 percent of the time, I'm calm usually, and I have a lot of anger as I think a lot of young women day when you figure out how you're treated on the norm in certain places. So that fuels that aggression, which I love - music with pure aggression. I'm inspired by the riot grrrl movement." Jade will take to the main stage at the All Points East festival at London's Victoria Park's on June 1, 2019 alongside headliners Mumford & Sons, Leon Bridges, Dizzee Rascal, The Vaccines and Sam Fender.

McKenna wants Musgraves duet

Megan McKenna is hoping to get a collaboration with Kacey Musgraves on her next record. The 26-year-old country singer has opened up about when she saw the Grammy-award winning songstress during her 'Oh, What A World: Tour' last year - which was in support of her fourth studio album 'Golden Hour' - and revealed that she would love to feature Musgraves on her next project because she has been a huge fan of hers "for years". Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz, Megan said: "[My dream collaboration would be] Kacey Musgraves. I've listened to her for years and finally got to see her perform live at Wembley last year and got to meet her too!" And Megan "couldn't believe it" when she saw that her debut album 'Story Of Me' went straight to number one on the iTunes country chart back in December. She added: "When I saw it was no.1 on the iTunes country chart I couldn't believe it. To see my album cover next to so many other amazing country artists that I've looked up to for years was a dream come true." The 'Celebs Go Dating' star also revealed that the secret to songwriting is always speaking from her heart. She added: "It's gotta be from the heart whatever's on your mind at the time there's no point holding back so you might as well write it down." Megan also revealed the four items she can't live without when she is on the road and it includes "lemon, ginger and honey" to keep her throat in tip-top condition. She continued: "My throat steamer, manuca honey, lemon and ginger to keep my voice in good condition." Megan kicks off her 'Story of Me Tour' on May 30 at Chinnery's in Southend-on-Sea.

