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**Gwen Stefani's surprised to learn about her gay fan base. You'll be surprised to learn about her new dance album, Jean Harlow and Harajuku**

What are we waiting for? Gwen Stefani's solo album, that's what! Not that the fashion and rock icon has had much time to work on the project: She just finished touring as lead singer of No Doubt, whose video "It's My Life" swept the Video Music Awards this year. She recently filmed a part in Martin Scorsese's *The Aviator*.

She's overseeing her own fashion line, L.A.M.B. And she's married to Bush guitarist (and British hottie) Gavin Rossdale. Yet somehow, Gwen found time to record *Love. Angel. Music. Baby*, which drops November 23.

Though today's hottest producers share credits—Nellee Hooper, Dr. Dre, Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, André 3000, Dallas Austin—the album is inspired by '80s dance acts (New Order's Bernard Sumner and Peter Hook as well as Wendy and Lisa from Prince's *The Revolution* all show up on "The Real Thing"). As you can imagine, we couldn't wait to get more details from Gwen herself...



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**Obviously your music has universal appeal, but since we're a gay entertainment magazine, let's explore that relationship.** Oh God...

**What? You must know you have tons of gay fans!** Awww....That makes me really, really happy.

**Haven't they made themselves known to you?** I haven't really identified myself as a gay cult leader or anything like that! [Laughs.] It's never been very clear to me. I guess the answer would be no. I am surrounded by very talented people—some of them happen to be gay. Once in a while, I'll meet a fan that has a certain kind of, um...

**Vibe?** Self expression going on with his look. And it's definitely inspiring to me to see my influence.

**Any gay person who has particularly influenced you?** One of my biggest heroes is [fashion designer] John Galliano, and I think he might be gay.

**I think you might be right! Gwen, your gaydar is working fine. Just turn it on!** [Laughs.] I'm just so amazed by him and his level of creativity. His vision is just striking.

**You've described the new disc as a dance record, so tell us about your favorite dance acts.** It's hard to say because dance has a different definition for everybody. On this record, the biggest influences were Club Nouveau, Lisa Lisa & Cult Jam, The Time, Prince, Debbie Deb, Salt-N-Pepa.

**Careful, you'll show your age! People are living for the Jacques Lu Cont mix of your new single, "What You Waiting For?" How involved do you get with the club remixes?** The whole idea behind this record was that I want to be in the clubs so bad! I'm going to make an extra special effort to go out a lot in the next few months, because I want to hear the songs out there, you know?

**Come to New York—we'll take you clubbing.** I'm ready to go! But the remixes are a really big part of this. Once the song goes out to the remixers, there's not much input. It's basically a free-for-all, and whoever comes back with the best mix is the one I'm going to approve. This whole record was all about collaboration.

You write this song, and then you have someone else do this whole twist on it—I love the process.

**Let's talk fashion. Update us on your L.A.M.B. line—will it ever include clothing and accessories for men?** I couldn't be more passionate about designing. But I don't see how I would have the time to do a guy's line. It's not like someone else is really doing it. I'm very involved. But I have been doing a lot of T-shirts for my friends because I have such a great graphic designer. But I don't consider that design. [Editor's note: The deluxe edition CD available on gwenstefani.com includes one of Gwen's limited-edition T-shirts.] Also, in the new fall L.A.M.B. bag collection, I created some sports bags that are definitely guy-girl. A lot of guys would wear them. It was intentional.

**Who did your album cover [pictured above]?** An artist and photographer called Nick Knight who has worked closely with John Galliano on all the Dior ads. And it's really weird to do an album cover because it's so specific and so permanent and it defines the whole thing and it's hard for me to really like it. It's like choosing a wedding dress. But he did this incredible job. It looks like exactly what the record sounds like to me.

**Can you describe the look that represents your solo effort?** I have this stylist, Andrea Lieberman, who I met when I did the Eve video. Before that, I didn't know too much about high fashion. I just went thrift store shopping in Orange County. She opened my whole world up, and we've been collaborating ever since. I got really inspired by this whole Harajuku scene, which is this kind of shopping area in Tokyo. Kids for the last like 15 years have been coming there and it's like this whole dress-up self-expression thing. A lot of kids make a lot of effort, and I relate to that. I also get inspired by the whole idea of fashion around the world and how we steal from each other. For this record, Andrea and I would have these creative retreats. We'd watch old movies and tear from thousands of magazines and get tons of ideas together. It's

not like we're trying to reinvent my look or anything, but just draw from all the inspirations that are around me right now. The visuals after the music is the big reward to all the hard work of making the songs.

**I had read that you're inspired by clothes from the 1930s and even buy vintage patterns online. I assume that's a result of your playing actress Jean Harlow, the original blonde bombshell, in *The Aviator*. Did you know much about her before you were cast? I just need to start by saying that there's no small part in a Martin Scorsese film, but the part that I play is like one line! They really built this thing up to be like I'm the star. It's a little embarrassing. [Laughs.] I did know about Jean Harlow because I've always been obsessed with American Turner Classics. But when I got the part, I read two biographies about her, and both of them were like completely opposite, and I really don't know the truth. And I rented every single movie I could get. I got tons of inspiration. There's this one dress that she wears in this film—I can't even remember the name of the movie—they even referenced it in the movie like, "Oh, that's a really tacky dress." I ended up re-creating the fabric of that dress and I used it for my Grammy outfit one year. I also made that fabric part of the Spring 2005 collection. It's interesting because all these different inspirations spill into all these different areas. In the movie, I play this scene where I'm with Leo [DiCaprio]. He's playing Howard Hughes and we're going to the premiere of *Hell's Angels* at Mann's Chinese Theater. They rebuilt the whole thing in Montreal. It was incredible. There were 500 extras. The styling was just unbelievable. It was so real that when we got out of the car to do the red carpet, there was no acting involved.**

**Could acting ever replace your singing career?** I don't think that there could ever be a way for acting to touch playing for 20,000 people. There's just no way to get that on a movie set. But I'd love to do more acting. That was one of the reasons I wanted to take a break from the band. Then this whole freaking record took over my life! But I'm really proud of it. I feel like this is the reward now, to be able to share it with everybody, and get all dressed up and make videos. I love that part so much—and I love talking about myself!

Love. Angel. Music. Baby. (Interscope) drops Nov 23.

