

CHICK OF THE YEAR!

instinct

DECEMBER 2004

Gwen Stefani

Exclusive:

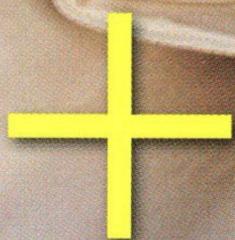
Her First-Ever Gay Press Interview

The Best (And Worst) Of 2004

Green Day's Billie Joe
Gay Marriage
The Daily Show
Hot Aussie Men
The Olympics
Corvette vs. Mustang

— & —

Our Favorite Places To Shop



Bea Arthur On The Golden Girls:
"Everybody Wanted Their Mothers To Be As Cool As Us"

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ON THE COVER: GWEN STEFANI

Photos **LORENZO AGIUS**

Grooming **DANILO**

Stylist **LISA STORY**

Special Thanks **FLY-LIFE, INC.**

WHAT A YEAR!

THE BEST (AND WORST) OF 2004

starring

THE DAILY SHOW as
THE ONLY SANE NEWS ON TV
OPRAH WINFREY
as THE STUNT MASTER
IPODS as THE MUST-HAVE TECH TOY
FOX NEWS as
THE VILLAIN
COURTNEY LOVE as
MOTHER OF THE YEAR
HURRICANES as
THE BEST REASON FOR A BOOTY CALL

and introducing

GWEN STEFANI
as **OUR CHICK OF THE YEAR**

It's

hard to believe that this is Gwen Stefani's first gay press interview—especially considering how much we queer boys love our stylish, ballsy, independent, hard-working, trendsetting, pop star blondes (real or dyed). So much so they can all be addressed by their first names: Madonna. Debbie. Britney. Christina. Kylie.

But there is a difference between the ladies above and Gwen. She nails it when she tells *Instinct*, "I don't feel like I'm very controversial. I don't want to upset people, I just want to make them feel good."

That pretty much sums up why Gwen Stefani is our Chick Of The Year. Not only would we switch for her in a heartbeat—just name the time, place and what kind of wine we should bring—but she embodies the type of female that gay men *should* be adoring. She doesn't stir up controversy because, really, what does that accomplish other than killing trees to print copies of *Us Weekly* and *Star*?

No, instead Gwen inspires—and she doesn't need to get hitched in Vegas while drunk or expose herself in a coffee-table book to get attention. She just works her butt off. And she can't get enough of creative people or the creative process, and vice versa. Just look at her list of collaborators: The Neptunes, Moby, Andre 3000, Linda Perry, Eve, New Order—among others.

By having Gwen as the first chick to appear solo on our cover, *Instinct* is officially proclaiming her the queen of the next wave of gay icons. She has all the ingredients we love without any of that lame tabloid baggage. And, even though she swears a lot (which we totally dig), in the end she's what we all wish we could be: Classy, successful and respected.

INSTINCT: Before we get started, I just wanted to say happy belated birthday. Did you get to do anything fun?

GWEN STEFANI: Thank you! I did. My husband had a little barbecue party for me. I hadn't seen anyone because I was in London or wherever I was. [Chuckles] So they all came over and we ate lots of food and caught up with each other.

You have to big "firsts" coming up: Your first film role, in *The Aviator*, and your first solo album. Obviously, they're two very different experiences. What was the most thrilling aspect of being in a film, especially one with Leonardo and directed by Martin Scorsese?

I've been wanting to do film for a long time. One of the big reasons I took time away from the band is, at the end of the *Rock Steady* Tour, it was almost like we were married to each other for 18 years and we never took any breaks. We kept going out of pure passion. ➔



DRINK ME...

{WHAT A YEAR!}



It seems perfect that you are playing Jean Harlow in *The Aviator*.

[Laughs] When I read who they wanted me to play, my stomach was on the floor—oh my god, Jean Harlow! [Laughs] Howard Hughes basically gave Harlow her first movie role and the scene that I'm in is when they go to the premiere of the film, *Hell's Angels*, at the Mann Chinese Theatre. I thought it was kind of ironic that it was my first movie role and I was playing Jean at the premiere of her first film. It's actually Herb Ritts' fault that I got the part.

His fault? How's that?!

Herb Ritts was the one that had done this photo shoot for *Teen Vogue* with me. It was his idea to do this Marilyn [Monroe] on the beach thing. I was just so happy to finally be working with Herb. Martin Scorsese saw that cover on the side of a bus station and thought, *Hey, let's get that girl to try out.*

Is this the type of first movie role you were hoping for?

There is no small part in that film, but it was only, like, five days of work. It was really incredible to start off playing someone like Jean Harlow. I haven't done much acting but I have a feeling that it is something that I would enjoy. Not that it can compare to playing for 20,000 people and getting that immediate reaction being on stage.

And with the new record, *Love. Angel. Music. Baby.*, you get to explore your inner dance diva.

I had a specific record I wanted to make. But it snowballed and became this really hard, ego-busting project. The clock was ticking in my ears; I thought writing dance songs was going to be easy. You don't have to think about anything, you just have to write, "Get on the dance floor and boogie." I wasn't looking to have a theme, just a guilty pleasures record.

"I've been smart never falling for a gay guy because you'll only get your heart broken, right?"

Guilty pleasures. We like those. And because you're, well, Gwen Stefani, you had quite the opportunity to work with a bunch of great producers.

I had a list of people I wanted to work with that I thought I could get a certain sound with. Linda Perry came up to me at the Grammys and I was so happy for her because I had known her for years. We were the first two girls signed to Interscope and I was happy for her success because I knew her journey. She's a very aggressive girl. [Laughs] She came up

to me and basically put me in a headlock. She gave me this intense look right into my eyes and she said, "We've got to write songs together!" I'm just kind of thinking, *Dude, you're not Prince, you know?* [Laughs] *How are you going to write my dance record?*

She did write that get-your-bootie-to-the-dancefloor song for Pink.

I was looking to work with people like Prince and Andre 3000. Robert Smith. Anyone that I liked back in high school. ➔

WHAT A YEAR!

“Trust me, I’m surrounded by gay guys”

But, come on, this is Linda Perry.

I didn’t know how talented she was. That some girl could run the board and has all this equipment, tons of guitars, drums, a massive studio, it was all very impressive for me. I’ve done this for half my life and I’ve never gone in and had girls who were able to run the board. We ended up writing a song that first day called “Fine By You” which was basically: I don’t want to be inspired, I just want to be lazy, but whatever I want to do is fine by you and you like me still. I came back in the next day and [Linda] didn’t even look at me when I walked in; she had been up all night and pressed play and this crazy maniac track came out. What the fuck? You did *not* just pull that shit out! It was almost like a dare. She’s, like, “Gwen, what the fuck you waiting for? You gotta do this shit now.” We looked at each other that day and there was definitely electricity and you could tell it was all meant to be. It still bugs me that she wrote “What you waiting for?” She wrote that line. Nobody fucking cares, I know. Nobody cares but me.

In that single you mention that this “dance” record you’re making is going to bring you “brand new fans.” As if you needed to make a dance record to get the gay boys to like you anymore...

[Laughs] You know, my hairdresser, who’s gay—go figure—he was, like, “There’s a category for gay guys?” Like you all like the same type of music. I know that isn’t true. I’m not stupid, I understand that there’s a whole club scene. Trust me, I’m surrounded by gay guys.

We guess it’s just that this solo project, especially since it’s more dancy, is going to bring even more gay guys to worship at the Altar of Gwen.

The one thing I’d like to mention: I feel really uncomfortable when people say I’m going solo because I feel this is definitely not somewhere I’m going. I feel like if I was going solo I would be leaving the band and not compromising and writing this whole record on my own and it would be pure Gwen. This is simply just me just going, *Fuck, I wouldn’t mind trying something different before I die.*

That makes sense. Do you ever get a chance to make it out to queer clubs and check out all the hot, unavailable men?

[Laughs] I’ve been out a little bit in New York. It’s not like I make a conscious effort to go to gay clubs. It’s just that a lot of creative people that are around me just happen to be gay. This one time, up in San Francisco, we went to this one club one night and we watched all these performances. I just love all the creativity and self-expression and I think that’s what attracts me to the scene.

It’s funny to have you on the same label as Eminem and a lot of other homophobic rappers. Plus, with regards to No Doubt, you have a lot of reggae and Dancehall influences, and both of those are rather homophobic.

I don’t really think twice [about hanging out with gay people], that’s why it’s so weird. A friend of mine, he’s this talented and successful guy, and he told me this rapper didn’t want to work with him because he is gay. I was, like, “What?!” People would pay *anything* to work with him, so I was shocked. And the Dancehall/reggae community, I love that music so much, but to have a connection to that intolerance is really embarrassing.

But Rufus Wainwright is now on Geffen, which is, I think, a subsidiary of Interscope.

I know Rufus. My head designer at L.A.M.B., Zaldy, and Danilo [who does Gwen’s hair], they’re all friends with Rufus. Sophie Muller, a good friend, she filmed Rufus’ video [for “April Fool’s”] at my house. He’s sweet. I e-mailed him a few times and he called me wanting to do something together, but I was already 20 songs into my record.

Have you ever fallen for a gay guy?

I’ve had dreams where I’m making out with Danilo, he’s so handsome. If my husband went missing I would definitely ask Danilo to fill in. [Laughs] He’s a great friend, though. But no, I’ve been smart never falling for a gay guy because you’ll only get your heart broken, right?

Some girls never learn that.

[Laughs heartily] You’re funny. *Some girls...*

So L.A.M.B. just launched this past spring. That’s what, like, 20 gigs you have going now? Singer, songwriter, actress, designer, babe...

[Laughs] That last one is the toughest one! Clothes are something I’ve done my whole life. I’ve been sewing my clothes since high school. My stylist, Andrea Lieberman, she’s this New York super way cool Jewish version of me. I’m from Orange County so I didn’t know that much about high fashion. Andrea opened my eyes to that whole world. When I started I was, like, I can’t do it. Sitting in front of piles of faux fur trying to make decisions. It’s a full-time job that I’m trying to do as a part-time job. But I fucking love it so much, it fulfills me, it’s my passion, that I would die if someone took it away from me right now.

It’s all women’s clothes right now?

Yeah.

So we’re going to see a lot of drag queens wearing your stuff?

[Laughs] I hope so!

Okay, you’re in the spotlight a lot—so how have you avoided the scandal?

I think I’m a pretty good girl. I try to be a good girl. I don’t feel like I’m very controversial. I don’t want to upset people, I just want to make them feel good. At this point it’s all about sharing and hoping people get what I got out of this record. I made it for myself. I just want to share what I’m doing and if they get off on it, too, that makes me feel really good. I really, really wanted to make a record that was going to be playing in the clubs, yet I have yet to hear it in any of the dance clubs. But I’m going to be going out a lot to see if I’m making people dance.

Okay, I’ll do my part to make sure the gay boys are shaking it to your songs.

You’re sweet! Thanks for talking to me, dude.

—PARKER RAY