

With the release of her new album X, the 'will she, won't she?' tour dilemma continues, but according to the latest reports, fans are in for a huge treat next summer when the KylieX2008 tour kicks off.

"I'm putting together a show that will be a new and exciting experience for the audience and myself," she gushes, adding defiantly, "My new tour will include the favourites alongside the new. I can't wait to share it with you next year!"

Reflecting on Kylie's life is like scanning through your favourite family album; through the 1980s and early 1990s you'll have watched her evolve from the tempestuous tomboy mechanic, Charlene in *Neighbours*, to a gyrating glamourpuss in the Agent Provocateur advert. If Kylie's illustrious career, along with her ever-changing image, was represented on vinyl, each track would be a floor filler. ■

# SHOW GIRL

With the release of her latest catchy album X, Kylie proves you just can't get her out of your head. Alexandria Gouveia attempts to get inside of hers





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### TRACK 1 SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT

The pint-sized Princess of Pop once lived in the shadow of little sister Dannii, a regular on weekly music programme, *Young Talent Time*. However in 1986, she was thrust into the limelight when she joined TV soap, *Neighbours*. As a charismatic 18-year-old, her unsullied performance as a young mechanic made her a show favourite. *The Guardian* newspaper said of her screen innocence, “Her appeal at first lay in her unapologetic ordinariness... she played an oil-smudged mechanic with no desire to better herself. Charlene was happy to spend her life grappling with the intestines of cars.” Kylie’s loveable character captivated audiences; once her on-screen romance with Scott (Jason Donovan) spilled into reality, everyone was hooked, with an almighty 23.8 million viewers tuning into the 1987 episode where Scott and Charlene finally wed.

### TRACK 2 LUCKY ONE

During a benefit concert with the *Neighbours* cast, Kylie wowed the crowd with her funky rendition of Little Eva’s *The Locomotion* – it turned out the little girl had a big voice. Putting her thespian ways on hold, Kylie was rapidly signed up by Mushroom Records, and the song was released as a single. After seven weeks at number one in the Australian charts, Kylie had her sights set on UK success. Despite being an upcoming star in her homeland, when the diminutive delight arrived at the Stock, Aitken & Waterman studios, she was made to wait. Peter Waterman and his colleagues had forgotten about her and hastily penned the lyrics to *I Should Be So Lucky*. The rushed song became a hit in OZ and the UK. A string of hits followed with *Especially For You*, her duet with then boyfriend Jason Donovan, selling over one million copies and remaining a firm karaoke classic to this day. Despite her success, Kylie was accused of being manufactured. She agreed, “If you’re part of a record company, it’s fair to say you’re a manufactured product. It doesn’t mean that you’re not talented and that you don’t make business decisions,” she declared. ▣

## TRACK 3 CHANGE IS 'A' COMING

Considered one of the most beautiful women in the world and with four albums under her glitzy Dolce and Gabbana belt, Kylie wanted more control. "I wanted to have more involvement with the making of my music, which of course didn't happen," she laments. As a result she refused to renew her contract with Stock, Aitken & Waterman. Feeling stifled, she stated her role was simply to "learn your lines... perform your lines, no time for questions, promote the product." Kylie signed up with Deconstruction Records, a move touted in the music industry as the beginning of a new phase in her career, but which ironically led to the deconstruction of the mega pop image she'd worked so hard to build. Although *Better the Devil you Know* was a success, her brooding ballad, *Where Wild Roses Grow*, with fellow Australian

artist Nick Cave, was panned by critics. Despite this, Nick played a fundamental role in the star's life. Kylie enthused, "He taught me to never veer too far from who I am, try different things, and never lose sight of myself at the core. For me, the hard part was unleashing the core and being totally truthful in my music."

## TRACK 4 SHE'S GOT THE LOOK

Determined to lose her cutesy facade, Kylie set about straightening her hair, puckering her lips, enhancing her assets and ditching her mundane attire in favour for skimpy designer couture. Recalling the media's obsession with her image she said, "They like to paint me as the girl next door, and sometimes I am the girl next door. I don't know if they also expect me to be an absolute prima donna. I have my moments. I quite fancy slamming doors. I give good flounce if I have to." Fully encapsulating her sensual demeanour, the tiny Aussie shocked the pop world thanks to her high-profile romance with INXS frontman Michael Hutchence. The bad boy rocker said he enjoyed "corrupting Kylie". Suddenly the press stopped looking at Kylie as the girl next door – she'd moved out and was now a vixen. ❏





## TRACK 5 GOLD!

Over a decade since leaving *Neighbours*, Kylie wasn't yet ready to retire from her oscillating career. With the help of some gold charity shop hotpants, she wriggled her way back into the UK charts with *Spinning Around* earning her a fifth number one. Her new pin-up girl image and wrinkle free face – courtesy, if the rumours are to be believed, of Botox – earned her plenty of press and top positions

in male magazine polls. "It's part need and part something I enjoy," Kylie explains of her constant reinventions. "I thrive on change and variety, so to have a new look for, not only an album, but every single, is something I enjoy." The sovereign of style has changed her look so often that Madame Tussauds have completed her fourth waxwork. Only Queen Elizabeth II has had more.

## TRACK 6 BOYS WILL BE BOYS

With killer pins, millions in the bank and perfectly coiffured hair, Kylie's a great catch. So it's no surprise that her dating profile reads like a telephone directory. During her *Neighbours* era, fans followed the love story of Kylie and Jason (Donovan) like a *Mills and Boon* novel. Yet, the couple amicably went their separate ways in 1990 when Kylie wanted to focus on her career. It's this determination to be a big star that destroyed many of her romances. "Life's too short. My philosophy is to live life to the fullest. It's not in my character to sit around. As soon as I wake up in the morning, that's it – there's no going back to sleep."

Kylie then began for falling for pretty boys including model Zane O'Donnell and mysterious photographer Stephane Sednaoui and she was soon earning attention from America's hottest stars including singer Lenny Kravitz, with whom she enjoyed a brief liason. Model James Gooding, the man she thought she could spend her life with, was demonised by British tabloids when he became the man that not only cheated on Kylie – with Sophie Dahl – but also dumped her. History repeated itself when the starlet's engagement to Olivier Martinez ended after three years – the French actor was unable to stop his philandering. Despite the relationship's demise, Kylie called him her "rock" for supporting her during her battle with breast cancer. "Being a fatalist I always felt that relationship ran for the duration it was meant to run. We did have a lovely time though", she reasons. ❏

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## TRACK 7 PAUSE

Seemingly at the height of her fame Kylie launched *Showgirl* – the greatest hits tour. The tour was intended to be the most extensive of her career with an anticipated audience of 700,000. Yet, following the European leg Kylie was diagnosed with breast cancer, the tour was subsequently postponed. Retreating back to her home town, Melbourne, Kylie underwent surgery. Fellow Aussie and survivor of breast cancer, Olivia Newton John urged the media and fans to respect Kylie's privacy during the intense period.

During her time out of the limelight, Kylie wrote a book *The Showgirl Princess*, and launched her successful celebrity fragrance, *Darling*. Despite her longing, Kylie's body wasn't strong enough to complete her *Showgirl* tour. "When you're stripped of everything and you have to grow your eyelashes back, grow your hair back, it's just astonishing," she recalled. "As far as my body goes, I've shrunk to nothing ... I've ballooned – my body is not what it used to be, but it's the body I am in."


In November 2006, the performer resumed her tour. During her first show, in Sydney, she jokingly apologised to the crowd for being "fashionably late".

## TRACK 8 BABY COME BACK

Collaborating with Guy Chambers, Cathy Dennis and newcomer Calvin Harris, Kylie is back on the scene and in hot pursuit for more chart success with her 10th album, *X*.

"I was so excited to be back in the studio," beams Kylie, about her latest album that's crammed with fun dance tracks, such as *Giving You Up*. Inspired by the 1958 film, *Attack of the 50 Foot Woman*, clubbers everywhere have been swept away by its pulsating bass.

Working with Swedish producers, Bloodshy and Avant, Kylie believes



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she's achieved a good balance. "It's so production led. It has its own sound and quality." Kylie freely admits that the album single *No More Rain* has a history. "I wrote it almost like a mantra. I was trying to picture myself on stage and what it might be like to be back there. It sums up where I was and the help that I got from all kinds of people... even people I will never meet, never know, but felt their good will." With the album's mixed sounds, expect a live show that's just as innovative and exhilarating as the star herself. ■