

Who Are You Wearing? With Owain Wyn Evans

Kiri 00:00

Hello, I'm stand up comedian Kiri Pritchard McLean here to tell you that I'm on tour with my brand new show home truths. I'm going all over the country, wherever will have me. I'm touring right through the spring and then because some of you lovely lot have bought so many tickets, I'm now getting to talk for the whole of autumn as well. If you would like to get tickets, they're all available on my website. Or you can go to littlewander.co.uk and get tickets there. I can't wait to see you, and I don't want to brag, but I've got one hell of an outfit. Welcome to the who are you wearing podcast. I'm your host, Kiri Pritchard McLean, and every week I sit down and have a chat to a very stylish person about their clothes, their clobber, their gear, their attire. Now, this week's guest is broadcaster, fundraiser, I feel I have to put that in because they have raised literally millions for charity, and drama supremo, Owain Wyn Evans. Now this episode was recorded in May 2021, and Owain was fresh off BBC Breakfast still bedecked in suits, and I think I was probably in some trackies cross legged on the floor of my cupboard that I grandly call a walk-in wardrobe. Now fashion wise, I think we have a lot in common. We grew up in rural Wales at the same time, although in different places, and there's just lots of shared fashion memories. I don't know if it's exclusive to Wales, though. So do let me know. If fleeces were big, where you're from, Adidas poppers, were they big from where you're from, or was this purely if you live somewhere with no buses that, that was the fashion? All of which has made a comeback by the way. I think it's so fascinating to see Owain's journey in fashion, starting off with no real sense of style, not really being bothered about clothes, and then being influenced by his time in a band right through to the dapper, tailored slice of joy that we see on our televisions today. Also, there's a bit of Welsh in this episode, too. I think we both use the word capel, which is Welsh for chapel. You might have worked that out anyway while you're listening. But it's basically when we're talking about, we're talking about sort of Sunday best you know, the smart stuff you would wear I guess to go to church. Owain also talks about his mam-gu. So mam-gu is what people outside of North Wales in Wales call their grandmas. We say nain up here, pronounced like the number, there you go, a little bit of a short Welsh lesson for you there. Now Owain is another guest who's grown up on TV style wise, like Nikita Oliver and Laura Whitmore. But with Owain. I think there's an extra element of his sexuality too. So this makes for a really interesting and open, because Owain is very open, open chat about masculinity and queerness in the workplace, and it's something I hadn't really thought about especially considering this is a conversation happening in showbiz. Surely one of the most accepting places and it's not that Owain makes the assertion that it wasn't accepting. But even that has to be considered, I think is really fascinating. Owain is such a delight, and so funny. I think you're gonna love hanging out with him for this episode. So let's just crack on, please sit back and enjoy me asking, Owain Wyn Evans, who are you wearing?

Owain 03:49

You know, I grew up in Ammanford in southwest Wales. It's a gorgeous place, and I had a very happy childhood and upbringing. You know, the most wonderful parents, the most wonderful family and I feel very fortunate actually that, that was the situation for me, you know, but equally Kiri, you know, as a gay

man growing up in Ammanford, it was, it was not a place where there any reference points, and I never saw a gay person, you know, in Ammanford and I think that the closest thing you would get to that would be characters on TV who were often caricatures, or were often the, you know, the butt of a joke because they were gay, your camp or effeminate. So, that made me struggle with my identity a lot, and also growing up I was, it was a very polarised kind of approach as far as my identity was concerned, because on one hand, I used to ride motorbikes, and I was a drummer, you know, and without stereotyping too much, they probably lean more towards more masculine or butch kind of activities, and I also remember like putting, asked my dad to put a curtain rail across my bedroom so I could turn it into a theatre. So when my cousins came round we could put on ridiculous shows, you know? So that was quite camp. But as far as the style was concerned, oh my gosh, I remember buying this awful long sleeve T-shirt, which was made by a motorbike company, and it was, I felt amazing in it, it was, it was hideous. It was like covered in these really kind of acrid, bright colours and swirls, and it had a name across the front of it, and it's kind of what, you know, trials bike riders would wear, and I loved it, because I felt like it was a statement piece. Nobody else was wearing that sort of stuff in Ammanford, you know, but also, it was a bit of a heat deflector, because I think it was about the time when I was realising that I you know, that what, what being gay was, and that absolutely is what I was, and I felt like in a way that, that was like a bit of a facade that I could put on almost, which in hindsight, is something that I hate because I, I tried to completely be myself unapologetically till now, but of course, that wasn't always the case.

Kiri 06:12

So did you feel when you put this on that you were sort of, you were presenting a version of yourself that you thought was easier for the world to see, or easier for you to navigate from the other side?

Owain 06:26

Yeah, 100% it was definitely a heat deflector, and it was definitely a kind of, you know, between that thing, and my drums, it was something that, you know, people would tease me in school, because I was sometimes quite camp, but I would always be like, but you know, I'm also an amazing drummer and look at me in this motorcycle gear, you know, it's so weird. So yeah, it definitely was, I think, an identity that I was trying to kind of grasp on to, and there are probably elements of like, my fragile masculinity kind of baked into that as well, I suppose. But I've got to be honest, Kiri that, that long sleeve T-shirt did get the fling after a while. It wasn't something that I wore for years and years and years. But it's definitely something I remember as being significant.

Kiri 07:15

Imagine if you just tore up on your shirt now, and it was underneath.

Owain 07:18

Yeah, it's just under here. Yeah, I've actually had this tie made out of it.

Kiri 07:24

So when you're a kid, I'm thinking about like, primary school time, did you have a strong sense of style, or were you just wearing what everyone else wore, or did you have a sort of sense of self, in terms of your clothes, when you were younger?

Owain 07:36

I definitely did not have a sort of strong look, when I was in kind of primary school, you know, clothes were more just kind of a necessity really, or rather, they were, they were just a thing that I knew I had to wear because you'd have to wear clothes, you know, as opposed to I'm going to wear that for this reason. But I do remember kind of seeing you know, watching the box TV channel, which had like all the music videos on it or MTV and seeing people like Britney Spears and backing dancers wearing these, like matching outfits, you know, and I remember I bought these trousers from a shop in ?, which were like a weird kind of crushed polyester, kind of were quite shiny, and I, when I put those things on, I felt like a pop star you know, and I was probably, I don't know like year six or something then, but we never had very much money growing up you know, I come from a completely kind of working class family so I was never one to just get loads of stuff thrown at me. But equally I never ever went without, so the clothes were just a thing right up until work meant I had to take what I was wearing more seriously and you know, it'd have to become more of a thing I suppose.

Kiri 09:00

So who was dressing you back then through your, up until you start, because you started working professionally quite young. So it's, that's when you're sort of style hit. Who was dressing you before that, was it just whatever mam got or would it be something that you fancied or?

Owain 09:12

It was like whatever mam got. I do also remember going to Swansea or ? with my friends Sam and Joe and this was a big event you know, because we would, we'd go to Swansea and we would do a little bit of a shop and we'd walk around you know, Topman and River Island and you know all of these different shops and I, I would literally then, and I still do it now a bit to be honest, walk into a shop and like look at what the dummies were wearing. You know, I would look at what the the models, the looks that have been put together, would wear. So yeah, every now and then, I guess the whole, you know the look was peppered with things that I had chosen and things that I liked wearing, but I never really had a sense of pride in what I wear, what I wore up until, you know, I was probably in my late teens, and again, that was just because now I was in a situation where I have to wear stuff. Because work meant that I had to look half decent, I suppose.

Kiri 10:14

Were you ever made to wear anything by mam or whoever that you absolutely hated, can you remember putting on anything you're like, this is horrible, and I'm wearing this because I love you?

Owain 10:22

My school uniform 100%. Because I, school was not a happy time for me. I didn't enjoy school at all. In hindsight, I look back and I think that there were, there were definitely kind of signs that I was really unhappy in school, you know, I didn't like go into school, and I felt like it was a situation where I wasn't one of the kind of more academic members of my year or class, and I felt that absolutely in my case, anyway, then, you know, you were like, well do what you want, then, you know, there was no kind of push, and there was no support. Even with my drums. You know, I remember telling a music teacher that I wanted drum lessons when I was in like year, maybe year nine, and saying, he said, well, you're

the only one in the school who you know, wants to do the drums, and I kind of remember saying something like, well, I'm sure other people would want it if there was a drum kit there, and I remember my mother having to drag this drum kit into school for like an hour for me to have lessons, and then you know, I was missing classes, and I didn't care. So my school uniform, when I put that on, I definitely felt like I was, it was something that dragged me down.

Kiri 11:39

That's so interesting, because you're so sort of turned out and polished, I would have thought you're someone who would love the sort of like, the structure of uniform, and then have your own flair within it. But the fact that to you it seems like it was symbolic of just a place that wasn't allowing to giving you any support and clipping your wings, basically.

Owain 11:58

Oh, yeah. 100%, and, you know, I think things have changed now. I you know, I went to school in the kind of 80s and 90s, and I don't think that, I don't think schools were the same sort of places then as they are now. But having said that, yeah, absolutely. I remember putting on the uniform and I never once looked, I don't have any memories anyway of looking at my uniform and myself wearing it and thinking oh, yeah, you look really smart. You look really nice, you know, this should give you confidence. Whereas now, when I, you know when I throw a nice suit on, and my suits never cost very much. I always feel really proud wearing them, you know, and I always feel like yeah, this is something that I really like and I feel really comfortable in this and it's like, it's an amplifier of my personality. You know, it helps me be me I suppose Kiri. Was there an outfit, I know about your obviously, crushed polyester trousers from ? and I know about your sort of brightly patterned statement piece of a motorcycle shirt. But was there an outfit that you had or an item of clothing you just put on and you felt a million dollars or was it one of those? Now let me think, when I was, yes, so again, from this, what was the shop called? It was something, it was something brothers, I think it was like a kind of a rip off moss boss kind of place you know, which is where I got the crushed polyester from and I on the, I clearly, you've just ignited something in my mind, if I clearly had a penchant for a crushed material. Because I also had, do you remember those shirts that were like, they looked like they'd been in the tumble dryer for, like on a hot cycle that they shouldn't have gone in on?

Kiri 13:47

I got one of those and my mum ironed all the creases out.

Owain 13:50

Oh no! Really? That was the look. It was meant to be creased. I remember, this is probably when I was a little bit older. But still, you know, before I was wearing nice clothes for work. I remember wearing one of those shirts that I had, and I felt like a million dollars in it because I was like, this is, this is like Ammanford style. Now, you know, I felt like this is the, I'm introducing style to Ammanford at this stage, and I remember going to Time & Envy nightclub in Swansea when I was quite young and wearing this thing, you know, that was this crushed kind of shirt, crushed material shirt, and I think that, that made me feel a little bit more stylish, and actually, that was the shirt I wore to my first audition at BBC Wales when I got my job. So, and it was actually a shirt that I would have worn to a nightclub like a million times, you know, and it would have been washed a million times because, you know, obviously I would

have been out in it. So maybe that was the shirt actually that you know led to all of this. Bring it back. Where's it gone now? Yeah. I bet if you wore it to a nightclub as well, knowing the era that we grew up in, absolutely stinking of cigs, like how no matter how many times you washed it. Definitely, and you know, I think now when I go to a bar or something and I'm wearing a nice outfit, if it was back in the day when smoking was allowed, the whole thing would have to be dry cleaned, like the jacket, your coat, absolutely reeking of cigarettes, and you also get burnt weirdly wouldn't you? Like on the dance floor, I was there throwing some moves to Mystique, you know, in Time & Envy and I would get like a cigarette in my arm and then going through my crust shirt. Oh, a terrible moment.

Kiri 15:39

I remember times on nights out, you'd obviously not wear, you'd have to have a shower, you know, because your hair would stink of it, and then I remember times where I'd like get up to go out and I put the same bra on from last night and the bra would be like reeking of cigarettes, its so horrible.

Owain 15:52

The tobacco bra.

Kiri 15:54

Yeah, a tobacco bra, which I've just kept for posterity. When you're a teenager, what were the big trends, did you go in for any of them?

Owain 16:02

I remember buying a, and they were quite expensive at the time. I remember asking my mother that I wanted a pair, those Adidas popper trousers, you know, and I don't know if this was like, a subliminal, like throw forward in my mind or something that I kind of knew existed, but I had a pair that were navy, but the kind of branding down the side was almost like a rainbow. Like it was all different colours. They'd normally be like white and blue, I think. But you could get ones that were like all different colours, and I thought that, that was like a really good look, you know, but like, it was a weird kind of athletic look, you know, and I wasn't an athletic person in any way shape, or form. PE and school was one of the places where I felt the most uncomfortable because I wasn't sporty having said that, I did like a popper trouser. So I do remember definitely getting involved in that look, and also, I remember asking my parents for a birthday or something. A Peter Storm fleece jacket from style capital of Carmarthen, Millets, and I remember putting it on and just, what, this, chatting to you about this Kiri is bringing back all sorts of memories, honestly.

Kiri 17:28

I remember in year seven, like one of the coolest things you could wear for your coat was a fleece. It was a regatta, hello.

Owain 17:36

What was it with the fleece? Like everybody loved a fleece and it would be, it would make an outfit quite smart. You know, I think I'm sure I would wear sometimes my poppers, you know, so you've got the casual leg, and then you would wear the Peter Storm green fleece on top just to smarten up the look, you know.

Kiri 17:54

Sure yeah, so then you can go, it's like one of those looks you know where you can go from office to drinks later.

Owain 18:00

Oh, 100% I could go from, you know, not taking part in PE in my popper trousers to not going camping in my Peter Storm fleece. You know, for me, camping has turned into a completely different thing, darling, but we'll cover that later.

Kiri 18:23

Now did you have, because you describe a very gorgeous, happy childhood outside of school in particular. Did you as a rebellious phase then and did it show up in what you're wearing?

Owain 18:33

I remember when I was in sixth form, going to Claire's accessories in ? with my friend Sam, and getting my, the top of my ear pierced. I know, and you know what I loved about this even more? So the sixth form is, was when I was at my happiest in school. You know, I felt like I found a group of friends who I really, really got on with and really liked, and we you know, I still wasn't out at this stage, really. But it was just a really fun happy time for me, and maybe I got a bit rebellious then who knows. But anyway, for me the sort of me being a rebel looked like this, go into Claires with Sam and Joe, getting my ear pierced, and then because jewellery wasn't allowed in school, they would tell you, you have to wear a plaster over it. So I got like the biggest ring imaginable. It was like what you shove in the nose of a bull, you know, but it was in my ear there, it was really big, and I then had to get a massive plaster to cover it. So it was made more obvious that I was wearing jewellery because I had this gigantic bandaid on my ear. So I found that, that was quite, quite a rebellious time, and actually then, you know, I was probably starting to experiment a bit more with fashion then because I was in bands in sixth form and we were playing in, you know, like rugby clubs, and we will be playing in like everything from school discos to people's like 18 year old birthday parties which got pretty, you know, bonkers and Ammanford rugby club. Very fond memories, but I wasn't drinking you know, I would always be sober but I would always want to kind of wear something that was looking a little bit more, at that stage, extra, and this went side inside with my ear piercing as well I think.

Kiri 20:23

Especially because you're at the back on the drums like, you got to turn a look babes, otherwise no one's gonna see you.

Owain 20:29

Babes, do you know what, you've got to put on a show when you're a drummer, and that's more than just you know, doing a fast paradiddle you know, I had my, I had my Gareth Gates inspired spikes. Yeah, I mean, it was a look babes. I had my red pearl export drum kit, and I probably had, you know, my crushed polyester trouser on, aforementioned crushed polyester trouser on the leg, and varying types of of T-shirts that I bought in, you know, I'm trying to think what was the, somewhere like peacocks probably, you know, I used to like go into peacocks, buying a statement T.

Kiri 21:11

I love it. Did you go for the long sleeve and then a short sleeve over the top?

Owain 21:16

100%. I would always do that because I was quite a scrawny teenager, and you know, I was quite, I was quite slim, and I, I wouldn't really want to show much skin. So I would wear the T-shirt, on a T-shirt combo was absolutely a look that I would frequent. Not too practical in the drums and the drumming sort of world though Kiri, because they're quite restrictive, and they're also quite warm. So maybe that's conditioned me to play the drums in a suit now, which is something I like doing.

Kiri 21:48

I love that. The long sleeved T-shirt and T-shirt combo, walked so the suit could run. That's what it was in your style.

Owain 21:56

You're absolutely right. That was like the junior years of layers, and now I'm in the kind of more senior tier of that world.

Kiri 22:04

When I think of you now, I think you've got a brilliant, in terms of branding. I remember talking to an agent about this, and they were like you've got a really clear brand, because you could draw your silhouette, no face and people would know who it was, and I think the same with you with a big quiff, if you draw, if you drew a quiff and a three piece suit and a great big brooch, everyone would know who it was with you. It's really clear.

Owain 22:27

I love that. Thanks, hon.

Kiri 22:29

Yeah, it is it's a really clear like exercise in branding, I guess. But what's interesting is when I've seen you back in the day when you're working for BBC Wales, when you were younger, it's a very different style to what we see now. But there is definite style there. So you've said that you think, that your style journey started as a necessity in a professional way. Is that fair?

Owain 22:52

100%. That's 100% fair. Because when I got the job, as you said earlier, you know, the pictures that are kind of, exist of me when I worked on File at BBC Wales, which is a children's news programme, it was a very disposable look because I, you know, for the first time really, I had money, you know, and I was like, oh my gosh, you know, I can spend money on things that I, that I want instead of asking mum and dad if they can save up for stuff for me to have for Christmas or my birthday, which you know, more often than not would be disco lights or a smoke machine because I was quite a weird child in that sense. I still got some of the disco lights they bought me as a child actually. They're definitely a fire hazard now and are definitely not pap tested but that's another story. So I don't wear, I don't go near

those when I'm wearing my you know 100% synthetic fibre dressing gown. But yeah, I think that, what I would tend to do Kiri is, I would want to kind of get a look together that if I was sat at home watching TV and seeing a really young person on TV, basically wearing something that I at home would think, oh yeah, that looks nice, I want to wear that, you know, and if I, in hindsight, I probably didn't quite achieve that at the time if I'm honest with you. Because the looks were something else. But I would often get go for the weirder end of the scale because I remember buying these, do you remember those combat that had like just strings coming off of them? Parachute trousers, I think they were called. Parachute trousers. I had three pairs of the parachute trouser, which actually were very handy for work because they were covered in pockets, and because I was quite slim, and the technology was different back then. I just remember that like, the radio mic transmitter and the like talkback receiver, the like boxes that you have to wear, were huge, you know, it was like a box of biscuits you know? I was like where the hell am I gonna put those without ruining my look that I've just expertly put together from Topman? The parachute trousers is great because I could literally put these boxes in one of the 1 million pockets that existed on them, and because there were so many strings, the cables were also disguised by all this crap that was going on. So yeah, that's kind of when I went from it being, okay, yeah, I'll wear clothes because whatever or I'll, you know, I'll wear my motorcycle, long sleeve T or my T-shirt on a T-shirt when I'm playing the drums, to actually, I want to try and look nice now. So yeah, I kind of then started thinking, I want to just wear bold clothes.

Kiri 25:36

Well how did that intersect with your sexuality in terms of how you present? Were you thinking, I want young queer kids to look and see there's someone like me, or were you not there yet at all, and it was still hiding it?

Owain 25:48

That's, that's a really good question. I really wasn't there yet. You know, I knew that I was gay, and actually, I'd come out to some of my closest friends just before then, but then when I got the job at BBC Wales, I actually had to go back into the closet. Because I, I didn't feel like it was an environment in which I could be a gay man, you know, in like, 2002, or whenever it was, and I mean, the reality of it was, it absolutely was, you know, it was, it would have been fine, I think. But I do remember hearing things around, you know, work at Time, which probably made me feel a little bit self conscious, and I was very lucky to have the most amazing two bosses. When I got the job, Johan Kidd and Rhean James, who really I kind of owe all of this to because they're the ones who gave me the first job, you know, at BBC Wales, and I remember kind of coming out to them, and they were both literally like, they shrugged, and they were like, well, you know, who cares, and I think I was getting more comfortable with them. So I probably was being a little bit more camp. So they were kinda like, Well, yeah, you know, maybe we thought you were, but we didn't care. So I was, I was very lucky to have that situation. Having been in an environment like in school, which is incredibly homophobic, and you know, was literally, like, I knew this thing existed inside of me, but I had to put a lid on it, you know, but I think, you know, through those years, as far as my fashion went, I was, I was still trying to present as something that was maybe a little bit edgy, but also like, was a little bit laddie, and was a bit masculine, because I still had the drums, I still used to like telling people that I, you know, used to ride motorbikes and whatever, and also, then I started spending my money on buying ridiculous cars, you know, and don't get me wrong, I wasn't on a lot of money, but I would buy these really over the top stupid cars that were

like, almost like a heat deflector, or a thing to try and prop up this fragile masculinity I had, because it was before the time that I was embracing the fact that you know what, I'm flamboyant, and I'm gonna be flamboyant, and that is that. So there were all of these things being put up around me you know, all of these walls that I was putting up myself to present as this kind of, maybe a little bit laddie person and that was definitely reflected in what I wore, I think.

Kiri 28:26

Your hair back then as well was a statement like your hair is now, was like a strong look. Do you think of hair and makeup as, as part of your image? Because your makeup as well is brilliant. For someone who's got a skin tone that largely, is hard to match, like I've got friends who've got gorgeous, fair skin like you and makeup is an absolute nightmare.

Owain 28:46

Oh, yeah, it's so hard, and you know, if I'm honest with you, and I'm sure you've been in situations like this as well doing your job, you know, where sometimes you go and you know what looks good on you yourself, right, and you could do it well, and you, Kiri I've said this to you before, like you, you look amazing, you know, your hair always looks fab, and you've got such a great look, and I love it, I live for it. But also, I'm sure sometimes if you go somewhere where there are amazing makeup artists there, I sometimes get a little bit nervous that I'm like, Oh my gosh, how are they going to make me look, you know, because I feel now like I know that, you know, I have to put a little bit of this on, I have to put a little bit of mascara on otherwise it looks like I don't have any eyelids. I have to put a little bit of an eyebrow on otherwise it looks like I'm you know, an alien, without makeup on TV, I look like I've literally just walked out of like Roswell, New Mexico 1947. You know, this is what I have to do. So this is all just painted on babes. But I think, to go back to what you said about the hair and stuff. Yes, definitely back then, and this probably was me not quite knowing that I was finding my feet but it was absolutely me trying to like be flamboyant and make some sort of a statement while at the same time, I was being, you know, confined to having to feel like I was okay gay, but you know, quite a, quite a laddie sort of gay, you know, and I really hate that in hindsight that I felt like I had to do that because now the thing that I try to tell everyone is just be you, you know, like, I know who I am now, and I know that I need to be that person and do it deliberately. Whereas back then, I wasn't. So the hair I had like a blonde kind of stripe going back across the middle here, the dark, the edges were like, dyed like dark brown. It was such a weird look. But I think it was all part of me trying to find my feet, unfortunately on television every single day at the same time.

Kiri 30:52

The rest of us have like a few Facebook albums, do you know what I mean, that we're like delete, I'll delete that one from 2001. But yours is there, like forever. So on your journey to what we know now with your style. Were there any trends that you just, that you tried to pull off that just weren't happening?

Owain 31:37

Yeah, I remember seeing McFly. Like right at the start of when McFly started being like a pop group, and I remember thinking, Oh, actually, that's a look I quite like. So then I was like, trying to mimic that sort of aesthetic for a little while, and it just didn't work on me. Number one, because I wasn't in McFly,

and number two, because I was, I was absolutely not a skater, you know. So, you know, I mean, the closest thing to skating I would probably get to is me putting on my inline skates that my mother bought me from Argos when I was like eight and singing the theme of Starlight Express, you know, that was a very different look to the kind of McFly style look, and also in my 30s I think this was the transition into like, where I am now. My late 20s and early 30s I feel like weren't really good years for me because I was still really trying to find out who I was. I suffered, I still suffer from anxiety now you know, like my mental health is something that's gone up and down a lot over the years, and I feel like those times were particularly bad as far as a lot of stuff was concerned with that. I remember going into work in BBC Wales, and I just started doing the weather stuff. But you know, I probably wasn't wearing suits yet because I was doing it on the radio, and I remember it was summer and I was wearing this T-shirt that had like multicoloured diamonds all over it, and these shorts that were blue with like a very close white pinstripe on them, and I remember my boss at the time, who is head of news, bumping into me in the stairwell and he was like, Owain, what on earth are you wearing? I can just remember being like, right, okay, I need to fix this, and I remember, I remember telling Aaron and he was like, Well, yeah, you know, you looked awful, because I did. So there were a few like transitional looks that didn't work for me.

Kiri 33:38

Is there an era that you wish you existed in just for the fashion then?

Owain 33:42

I think the kind of 1920s and 30s in a kind of fashion sense were quite, quite good you know, to look smart, a man would wear a nice suit and would often actually have things like a pocket watch or maybe a tie bar. So I don't know if I'd want to live in those times as a gay man. But I, I would love to kind of you know, see what, what was the real strong fashion look then and see how I could like give it a little, Owain Evans tweak. What about you, what do you think?

Kiri 34:22

Well, I know exactly what you mean about the sort of turned out ? kind of, you know, look, and also I think there's flares of that in what you wear. You know you have your statement brooches, they are absolutely, they remind me of the gorgeous ones I still have of my nines that she would have popped on something to, you know, based on the occasion and her mood, the brooch would say an awful lot, which is something the Queen does as well, is that, you know, it tells a story doesn't it?

Owain 34:51

It does and do you know what's really interesting right, about this job, when I do the weather anyway. I, so I do the weather for BBC Northwest. I've done the weather all over the UK, different kind of capacities and I've also started doing some cover for BBC Breakfast now, and since every time I've started doing new things, especially with Northwest tonight, which covers the northwest of England, you know, cumbria all the way down to like the north midlands and also we get a lot of viewers in north east Wales actually watching which is interesting. I get a lot of ladies send me their brooches, and you know, the way you reacted then, that is how I react every time I open up one of these boxes, and I see like, oh my gosh Kiri, I had one, this lady said that she doesn't, you know, she doesn't really go out in the same way that she used to, and she sent me this box, it was these lovely little brooches, and you could tell

they were really old, you know. So I've got upstairs, I've got two boxes, actually, one which are full of the kind of stuff that I've bought, which is mostly, to be honest with you costume jewellery kind of stuff, you know, none of it's expensive, but it does, even in HD, they look quite good on camera, because they, they sparkle a bit and give a bit of lens flare. The other one is full of stuff that people have sent to me, you know, like the brooches and I can't wear all of it, because some of it would really work on the outfits I wear and on TV. But those like, what you were saying about the Sunday best sort of jewellery, I do actually wear now, you know, these make up part of my outfit sometimes.

Kiri 36:23

I love it. That's such a beautiful, beautiful story, and it's so nice that those, those pieces are carrying on and have a, you know, have another life, another flourish, and on the you know, a national stage like, that lovely brooch that someone would have worn, you know, ? on a Sunday and now is on the news, and there's hundreds of 1000s of people watching, its gorgeous.

Owain 36:47

Yeah, I love that about it as well, you know, because, and some of them, some of the people don't send the correspondence addresses and so I can't reply to them, and there are some I still need to reply to anyway. But sometimes I just, I wish all of, I wish that especially that lady who sent me that box, you know, I don't know why that resonates so much with me. I think it's just because she said that she doesn't have any, she doesn't wear these things anymore. I kind of wanted to say, I love these. They look amazing, and now I'm going to wear them on TV, you know, so you'll be able to see them. But hopefully she has seen them anyway.

Kiri 37:18

Is there anything clothing wise that's been around a long time that you've held on to, or is it, is it merely the brooches with the age?

Owain 37:25

I think it's mainly the brooches. If I'm honest with you, I, that sort of stuff that I used to wear back then, none of it I really still have now. I still have one T-shirt actually that is way too small for me, and it's a, it's made by a company called Atticus, and Atticus make like skate wear, and I used to wear it when I was playing the drums and it's now turned into a T-shirt that I sometimes wear when I'm like painting and decorating. But to be honest, it's like, it's so small. It's more of a boob tube now, to be honest, it's been through the hot wash so many times,

Kiri 38:00

I'm pretty sure Travis Barker, Bink Monik too who was meant to be the fastest signed drummer in the world. He used to always wear Atticus stuff as well. Because it was sort of skater.

Owain 38:11

A very fast drummer and that Travis Barker look was definitely one that I would have 100% bought into back in the day.

Kiri 38:17

Have you got an item of clothing now, that you put on and you just feel amazing straightaway?

Owain 38:23

I feel really lucky at the moment Kiri because with the job that I do right, that I have to basically wear this every day. I kind of feel like every day is an opportunity to dress up. But as far as a thing that I have had for a long, long time goes. There are a lot of shirts, ties and suits that I bought many years ago that I still wear now. But I think I've actually put to bed, anything that is older than that, because it's just not part of my look now, you know, it's not part of what I wear.

Kiri 38:57

Well, that's interesting to me because you, you hit this, you know, experimenting with your style when you're on telly as a young man. But like, when did the style that we see now, when did that appear?

Owain 39:08

So when I first started doing the weather, I made a decision that I'm going to obviously wear suits, and a lot of the time at that stage anyway, I would buy things from the more expensive kind of high end suit shops on the high street because I thought that's what I had to do. You know, I was like, I've got to spend 600 quid on a suit to air on TV because it's got to look nice, but a lot of the suits were hideous, and they were boxy, and I never buy suits from expensive places anymore. Just because I find like, they don't give me the slim fit look that I want. Everything's boxy, the trousers too big and it's not a look that works with me, and I was like, I want to do this but I want to be recognisable as a weather presenter, the weather presenter who wears a three piece suit with a tie, a sparkle on the lapel and a pocket square every single time. So I would say that this look probably has come together in the past six years, five years, and it's, I would say, in the past two years, it's like, firmed up into always wearing a three piece suit and always having this look, some people have even said to me, you know, is this fast fashion, and is this stuff that's not going to last? But if I'm honest with you, I put a suit on for TV, and I wear it, and then I take it off and put it back into the suit carrier.

Kiri 40:34

Interesting. So what is your relationship with shopping then? Is it, are you an in person shopper? Is it online? Do you ever do a bit of vintage, a bit of secondhand, or is it you found the stuff that works? Because I know what you're saying about fast fashion. But if you are wearing it multiple times, then you know, it's paying its debt back to the world. It's when it's sat in a bag and you never open it or you throw it away or you give to the charity shop where it doesn't sell, that's the problem isn't it?

Owain 40:59

That is absolutely the problem, and you've hit the nail on the head there because that is what I do. You know, I, I buy things, and if I don't like them, I try to send them back straight away. You know, and like what somebody else can, this isn't right for me. But you know, it'll sell somebody else'll get it. For me, you know, I always used to buy a lot of stuff from ASOS once I decided that I was going to do this look, or I would buy stuff from other companies. There are other companies out there by the way, this is not an ad. Now, I would say because of my hours, and because of what I do. I do find it's rather convenient to buy stuff online, new stuff online. But as far as the vintage stuff goes, all of my brooches are either

from like antique shops, or I get them online as like costume jewellery. Most of it is actually secondhand stuff.

Kiri 41:53

So what's the best bargain you've ever got from a antique shop or a vintage shop or a charity shop even?

Owain 41:59

Oh my gosh. So there is a great place in Halifax peace hall. There's a great little antique shop there, and they sell all sorts of stuff, and I got about five brooches there, and I wear them regularly. One of them is just a round kind of, it's just a circle covered in cut glass, and it's very sparkly. Looks great on camera, and I'm all for colours. You know, Kiri, I love putting a look together, and I would say that place in Halifax in peace hall is where I've got a couple of brooches for under a fiver, and oh my gosh, I've worn them so many times on TV, its great.

Kiri 42:43

Oh, that's so lovely. Again, they're living on, I just love that for the brooches, I feel so, I get such like emotional attachment to, to items and clothes. I'm like, I'm so happy for those brooches.

Owain 42:56

Well me too, because they're like, you know, they're worn a lot, they're used a lot, and I don't know the backstories of those, and like the ones that people have sent to me, you know, where I get a little bit of the story of them. I don't know a lot of, I don't know any of the history of the stuff that I would buy in like an antique shop or something, and I quite like older things anyway, you know, I like things that have some sort of history attached to them, and sometimes it's quite nice to have a bit of mystery around that like you know that this probably would have been somebody's pride and joy potentially or it might have been the you know, Nines Sunday best, Grammys Sunday best and I really love that there is some, some sort of history attached to it that I still don't really know.

Kiri 43:42

I love as well with the, with the ladies who send you stuff that chances are, they'll be of an older generation because a brooch was, was really loved by a slightly older generation, and I do think there's something really fabulous about them, seeing you, an openly gay guy really being fantastic on television and going, he could do a much better job with these brooches, because that's, that's also like, not just acceptance, but like a real vote of like, we love what you are and can we help be a part of it? That's still nice.

Owain 44:10

You know what? Yes, it is. It's lovely, and I get so many lovely messages of people saying they've never really had much contact with gay people before or queer people, LGBT people, and I consciously make sure that I'm not a caricature of myself and that I'm not like some over the top ridiculous, just comedic thing you know, I just try to be me and the welcome that I've had from an audience, that many people would probably think, would not necessarily be 100% okay with that perhaps, has been incredible.

Kiri 44:54

When I think of your style now, an element of it as well as being really, I think it's, it's very like chic, and fabulous at the same time, which is a really hard balance to work, but it's also really timeless. So do you see your style evolving again? I mean, are we gonna go back to the spikes, or are you like, this is me, this is the look?

Owain 45:16

Oh my gosh, I hope I don't go back to the spikes. I mean if spikes come back into fashion maybe, but I don't think they will. You're completely right there Kiri, this is a timeless look, you know, I think that for years people have been wearing three piece suits with, you know, some kind of buttonhole or a pocket square you know, it's why they're there and a tie. So for me now I think this is, this is it, certainly for the time being and I, there's something, I love wearing a suit in like a really weird situation. Like that sounded a bit, that sounded very dirty, but I didn't mean it like that.

Kiri 45:57

Stood at the orgy, full of dry roasted nuts just watching things in a grand suit.

Owain 46:02

Exactly, that's what it is.

Kiri 46:05

Is there an item of clothing, whether it's a specific item that you have, or it's, it's a genre of clothing that you can always see yourself wearing? Will it always be brooches, or is it always a specific like, this one suit I love and I'll have it forever?

Owain 46:19

I think its brooches. 100%, because what I love about a brooch is, it can, you can get so many different things to put in the buttonhole, and actually, there's some kind of argument as to whether or not you should wear a brooch on the same side as your pocket square, or whether it should be on the opposite side, or whether you should wear a brooch where the buttonhole is, or whether that is purely there for display, and that in itself is, you know, decorative. For me, that's too much head work. I've just decided, You know what, I'm going to shove everything on this side, and that's how it is. So with a brooch, to go back to what you were saying then, yeah, it is kind of, you know, it can be a flower, it can be made of material, it can be cut glass, so like, you know, pretend diamond, because I can't afford real diamond. So I always go for the you know, cut glass option darling. But it can also be like a little motif or a ribbon to represent something that you feel strongly for. So I think that, you know, for me what sits there on my lapel is important. I've got my headphones stuck in it now, but I also have a hand fan. You know, I love a hand fan, and I've got a good few hand fans.

Kiri 47:43

You mean a proper one of those hand fans, not the one that's sort of like little electric ones?

Owain 47:49

Like a battery operated hand fan. Yeah. Oh my gosh, maybe you and I can bring those back, the electric hand fan.

Kiri 47:59

They were everywhere. I remember like my mum packing me one with my like lunch to go to Alton Towers. That's for the coach when it got too hot.

Owain 48:07

Aw bless her. That is so cute. I love it, and there's something so kind of grandma, mam-gi about them as well, like that, because my mam-gi had one, the electric hand fan that is, I think that they're fab. But I was talking about the sort of thwarpe hand fan you know, and because I'm Ginger, you know, I get, I get hot and I get quite red. So I feel like the fan is a way of controlling that, and it's also an accessory. So all in all, it's a good thing to have.

Kiri 48:39

Yeah, I love it. Yeah, I know what you mean about the electric fans, there's a touch of the menopause about them isn't there?

Owain 48:46

There's a touch of time of life about them. I completely agree.

Kiri 48:50

Also, that's a thing that exists for those similar reasons of heat in the drag world as well because it's, you're in under a huge amount of plastic as a wig. You're under hot lights, you're throwing yourself around. So loads of queens have fans because you know, you want to keep your makeup from running down your chest to your toes. So as a necessity, but now it's a great thing that I see lots of drag queens. Their merch is a hand fan, and there's you know fan choreography, which I absolutely love.

Owain 49:19

I could see you with an embellished fan.

Kiri 49:23

Well, thank you. Yes. Many have complimented my embellished fan before.

Owain 49:30

Oh, yeah, I love a fan. I always have a fan in my bag actually, in my work bag. There's always a hand fan in there. A folding fan. Just in case I overheat.

Kiri 49:38

When I did my third show in Edinburgh at the festival. The rooms get so hot because there's lights and there's 50 people crammed into a little room that's not well ventilated. So on my seats before my show I go, because I was wearing this yellow sequin leotard with a yellow cape. I'd put yellow fans on all the seats for, so when people got hot they could they could fan themselves and cooldown.

Owain 50:01

Oh my god, that is amazing. What a great idea.

Kiri 50:05

Well yeah, because I just, I don't want them to be not thinking about the show, I want them to be you know, and if you're, sometimes you're like, I'm gonna pass out, I'm so hot. That's all you can think about. I just want them to be able to take their mind off it and I won't get distracted by fans.

Owain 50:17

Can you please explain to the listeners what I'm looking at? My husband is just here, thank you Aaron, here just talking about this, and he's brought in one of my favourite fans. So I, I host a lot of pride events and I'm a patron of LGBT foundation. So you know, kind of flying the rainbow flag is something that I'm very familiar with doing and have done over the years you know, and I bought this plastic hand fan, which is covered in multicoloured artificial feathers, and I remember buying it because it gets hot, as you said there with your show, this Pride event was in the summer, it was hot, it was outside, you know, so I thought a hand fan is handy, and also hand fans are handy for me because if I'm in the sun, I can use them to shade my face.

Kiri 51:09

Oh, you just pop it up above your head.

Owain 51:10

Yeah, if I can't get shade, and I like to try and stay out of the sun. I will just hold the hand fan over the head. So I bought this faux feather one. But you know what, it looks great, doesn't it? But it's completely impractical, because it's, it wobbles, Can you see the wobble on that? it's not a rigid fan.

Kiri 51:34

Yeah, it's that's for the aesthetic. It's not for the practicality. Is it?

Owain 51:38

100% and I tried filming with it once for something, and unfortunately, because it's got green in it, and I was filming in a green screen. They were like you can't use that fan, and I was like but it's so delicious, and they said yes, but it's got green in it, and the wall is green, this is a green room that you're stood in filming. So you know it has its downfalls. But ultimately, I think it's a great fan. It's a great one to have in the box.

Kiri 52:01

I was going to ask you what trend you're hoping never comes back?

Owain 52:05

I think there was a time where men's fashion was very baggy, you know like trousers, that the sort of, the looks that a lot of you know, they were probably the kind of, my reference points in pop music like the pop stars were wearing these really baggy trousers. I really don't like a baggy trouser. I think a trouser is good when it's fitted nicely on the leg, and it doesn't have to be tailored to achieve that. So

like baggy jeans the kind of skater jean look, even though I did once buy into that aesthetic. I think that, you know, that look has now moved on.

Kiri 52:49

So final question. It might feel a bit morbid, but it is it's intended to be a celebration. So what outfit would you be buried in?

Owain 52:58

Oh my gosh, that's a, that's a good one. It would have to be one of my suits. I think it would be a brightly coloured suit. I love a brightly coloured suit, a pastel shade I also love, nothing too garish. So I would say it's going to be one of my brightly coloured suits. A nice white shirt, a nice tie. All of the accessories, tie bar, one of my glittery lapel things and a pocket square. Probably maybe this tie, the tie I got married in, I love it, let's go for that. The tie that I got married in, a nice brightly coloured suit and all the metal stuff and I'm not going to be cremated so I think we can put metal in.

Kiri 53:44

Owain Wyn Evans there, can you believe it has taken this long to give the parachute trouser the love and adoration it deserves. Not only a fashion staple of anyone who was born around the same time as me, sort of 86 time, but also turns out incredibly practical. Incredibly practical. Those big pockets come in useful if you happen to be, to have a need for a microphone in your back pocket. Honestly I think the chat that Owain and I had about the brooches that he's been sent in this episode is just one of the most uplifting and beautiful things I've ever heard. I am so glad that the stunning brooches that Owain is sent are just living their best life on his lapel on our TVs, and also I think it's, I think it's such a beautiful thing that he's had a wave of acceptance, as he says from a group of people that you might not ordinarily expect it from. I think that's great and very heartening in these dark, increasingly intolerant times. It's a lovely thing to hear. If anyone would like to make me a rescue home for sequins, I am happy to do it. If you're sat there, like the old lady sending Owain his brooches. Maybe you're like, you know what this girl she deserves a better day. If it looks like a size 16 bum could squeeze into it, send her my way. Do you know what, I was aware listening back to this episode that Owain's physique has informed a lot of his decisions when it comes to clothes and clothes make himself look bigger as a teenager, slim cut suits as an adult and how difficult that was to find, and I think, I think it's censoring of your body and clothing is something I've made very gendered in my head, which is obviously the height of laziness for me. But I think it's really interesting to hear from a man who's put as much thought into their body and, and how it will talk to the world through fashion, as my female and trans pals do. So I you know, I know that we give it a lot of thought. But it's also interesting that this guy would as well. Now I always love it when you guys get in contact. You can follow us @whoareyouwearingpod on Insta, you can pop us a message on there. If you've got something longer to say, email us whoareyouwearingpod@gmail.com. Absolutely love to get your emails, really buzz off them. We have a message from EJ on Insta who said, Hi, Kiri. Oh, I love this one, because I think, yeah, it ends with an errand, with a request. So I need you guys for this one. Hi, Kiri, loving the podcast and amazing guests you have on it. I've never realised how important clothing were to me until listening to your podcast and I plan, I plan outfits out weeks in advance for special events. Babes help me out. I've got a wedding coming up. I was wondering if you and your team, I love that. It's just me and a producer. If you and your team, knew of any sustainable maternity clothing companies, just travelling home from my 12 week scan and starting to show. Oh,

interesting. This is such a good one. Because by their nature, maternity clothes aren't that. Well, you only wear them for a bit right? Unless you're someone who's like perpetually, but I was gonna say Sarah Beanie, because I always think of Sarah Beanie being perpetually pregnant. Yeah, interesting. Guys get in contact, I imagine secondhand is the way to go right? Just hammering Ebay. But there must be people out there who have been pregnant, who will know where to get some sustainable maternity stuff. I imagine the word affordable is gonna fly out the window there, but I'll throw it in as well. Thanks that EJ. Get in contact. Now I've had a nice big think about this week's indie business and I've gone for a Welsh jewellery brand. That's pretty good start, isn't it? Welsh, tick, jewellery tick. So please meet Crane Jewellery. Now a brand that I only discovered through Instagram, because Instagram for no reason, with no recourse to appeal, had disabled their account. This is so tough for indie businesses, because platforms like Insta really are make or break for them, and I see so many small businesses breaking their hearts over the algorithm, and you know what, as a small business myself, I totally get this, you'll post and post and post, and then all of a sudden, you've got something that you need to sell at, you know, like a show or something like that, and it all disappears, like you know, and you're like, you can't, you can't get anyone to see that you've got this thing that needs advertising, and it's just so tough, especially if that's how you built your platform. So that's what happened to Jody Davis. The creative Crane lost over two and a half thousand followers in November 2021. But thanks to people spreading the word online, has now over three and a half, which is amazing, and hopefully by chatting about her on this podcast, she'll get a few more. Now, Jodi's jewellery is so beautiful, it's a perfect mix of looking really classic and timeless with it's sort of mid century in Art Deco lines, and it's, that influence is across everything, but also really not even modern, futuristic, I think. I also think Jody is really great at having something for everyone. There's really simple, elegant, classy pieces that I think like, I've got, there's like two people in my head, I'm like, I'm gonna go there for Christmas presents. I think they would obviously love that. But there's also huge statement showstoppers for folk like me, who like to show off on their ear lobes etc. I genuinely am forever sad I missed out on her galactic snake earrings because they're amazing. Big gorgeous brass snakes with pearls are coming out of their mouths, and I'm on them every day. There we go. I've said it. Her pieces are handmade, so made to last, and she uses as many sustainable and ethical materials as possible, such as eco silver, and recycled brass sheet. Now with the jewellery that has stones in, Jody works for the supplier who vouches for the origin and supply chain of the stones. So this is really unusual, especially in semi precious stones. The focus on the ethical nature of diamonds has been great, but I think it's led people to assume that the rest of their stones haven't caused suffering. Well, it's not always the case. Now. Jody also salvages vintage jewellery and reworks it into her designs. So if you want something well made, beautiful, shiny, that is ethical, that no one has suffered for to get there. Then please go and check out Cranejewellery.co.uk or on Instagram honestly, I think there's a really, I feel like it's real something for everyone vibes there. Thank you so much for listening. We're heading towards the end of series two. It has flown by, I tell you what, I'll do an Instagram live soon from my cupboard and we can chat about clothes. I absolutely love it when you ask me questions about my clothes or where I got stuff from, and next week I am back with the author Deshaun Harrison. That was an amazing, gorgeous chat and I am obsessed. They're one of the Instagrams that I perve at the absolute most. So I hope you'll join me then. Thank you so much for listening. See you soon guys. Who are you wearing is produced by Joe Southerd, the artwork is by Mary Phillips and the music is by Annie Glass. This has been a Little Wander production.