

Who Are You Wearing? With Rhys Nicholson

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 Kiri Pritchard Mclean. I am a stand up comedian and I love stylish people, and I started a podcast so I could chat to them about their clothes. The height of indulgence if I do say so myself, this week's guest is a phenomenal stand up whose jokes are as sharp as their suits. It is Rhys Nicholson. Now Rhys is so well dressed, he was already dressing the part as a judge on Drag Race Australia before he got the job that is no mean feat. This is a lovely episode Rhys is really honest, really open, it's fascinating cuz right at the end he goes 'I didn't know each other that well' I'm 'well this is probably the longest we've spoken to each other' and it's true, it is but that's all the more amazing when you think about how sort of like upfront he was with everything and I mean to make it clear we get on very well it's just sometimes it's hard to have a chat when you're in a dressing room. Something we'll go into at the end and there's loads of sort of middle aged grumpy men in it. This chat was recorded in August 2021, and heads up we talk about weight loss in this episode. Also we learn about Murray the Mole. Now I know there'll be a lot of Australians listening because Rhys is absolutely huge well everywhere because he was on Drag Race but you guys will know what Murray the Mole is, no idea this is a new piece of education for people I think outside of Australia or maybe just outside of Newcastle, Australia. So we learn about Murray the Mole and we learn about the advantage of being a redhead when it comes to disused mine shafts like I say Rhys is very open, very, very funny. So please enjoy this episode as I asked Rhys Nicholson, who are you wearing?

Rhys 02:44

For someone who is so obsessed with like I wouldn't say with fashion but I'm obsessed with kind of style and like people's style, and the concept of, I was, I did not have any for a long time, and I think it's like we grew up, this is not as grim as it sounds but like pretty, pretty poor and I think that's always the way that I dress now is a reaction to that, like I dress as if I'm quite wealthy now and I really love to buy things and I think it's not, it's not like, we weren't, you know, wasn't like the first 20 minutes of Billy Elliot. No, which I always think of like a perfect example of like wow, they are, they, he needs stuff, if you're using ballet as an outlet, Jesus. But a lot of not even hand me downs but yeah, just kind of like, I love, like charity shops, like I still charity shop a lot of my kind of regular clothes but I think it's just because we did a lot of charity shopping when we were kids and so a lot of like kind of ill fitting when I was a little kid although there is a picture of me, of me as a baby, like a pretty new baby and I'm wearing a little, like a baby jumpsuit but it's in the shape of a suit. Like a, and actually now thinking about it, it's a powder blue, like, and it's got like a little bow tie on it and my parents are at some, someone's wedding or something, and it is very funny to see like my baby face on like a little suit, looks like, the baby is cosplaying me, I think my parents, my mum loves like dressing up and stuff and, but they probably I

think as we got older could afford it less. It's almost like children cost a lot of money and kind of suck the life out of you, and then my grandma, and then we through a series of financial circumstances, moved in with my grandmother for a little while and she makes a lot of clothes, like she had five kids. The actual first piece of clothing probably is not a good style answer but a good like, I think it was like a merch shirt like, what band would it have been? It might have been someone weird like Kiss, which is so not me. But I'd gone to see Kiss, and I think I got to buy it with my own money, and there's something about that like, you know, and I wore that, it was like, it's a fucking kiss shirt. Like, can you imagine me as like, I must have been like 11 or 12, or something wearing a Kiss shirt all the time, all the time, and I used to wear my sisters hand me down Doc Marten shoes, because I thought like that thing where I've got one sibling and she's seven years older than me, which is enough time to like, covet, like, she just always seemed cooler than me. But she's always going to, she's always at a completely different time of her life. So everything is always like, she wears Doc Martens, so I want to wear Doc Martens, and so a lot of like, actually, maybe those Doc Martens are a better answer. They were these like, ruby maybe isn't the right colour, but kind of the colour of my hair, like Marbly Doc Martens, and she gave them to me and I would just I loved them, and they looked awful. I looked so bad. Because I think in those days as well before you work out what you want to wear you kind of just, it's more itemised. Like, it's more like, these are the shoes that I wear, and this is the shirt that I wear, and I'm not going to think about what they look like together. Yeah. Like, especially like little kids. When you, when you see a little kid get dressed, like when they dress them for the first time. That's a sentence that out of context isn't great. When you see a little kid get dressed. But when they're allowed to start dressing themselves, it is very like one of those books where you can pick the middle and the top and the bottom. Like, it's very like, well, these are my feet today, and this is my middle today, and we're gonna go big bows in the hair, and yeah, like I started dyeing my hair red in like pretty early high school. No one knows. Like, imagine being bullied for being a redhead every day and continuing to dye, like it's your choice. Like it was up to me, and I'm like, bawling my eyes out because people would be calling me a Ranga, it's like it's, but it's, but it's you that's doing it mate!

Kiri 07:19

That's so interesting. Yeah, it must have been very tough. I didn't know redheaded kids get a rough time in school just as a default. So you were, were you dyeing it a brighter red? Was it taking some ownership of it?

Rhys 07:32

I guess so yeah, like if I'm a redhead, but just not this, like I'm strawberry blonde, and I think I'm like a kind of mousy, boring colour, and again, my sister, my dear sister had dyed her hair red at some point. So I probably just did it with henna as well. henna dye, so it fucking stank, as well. Like it was really, like every time it got wet, it just smelt like manure. So that's the boy you want to kiss. The boy with girls Doc Martens on, a kiss shirt, and henna dyed hair. What a catch.

Kiri 08:03

Surprisingly sort of Goth rocker for what I expected from you as a kid.

Rhys 08:08

Yeah, but like with my voice, and I kind of what like, and I think maybe that's probably, Yeah, my sister was probably pretty gothy. Like we're in a small, like I grew up in Newcastle, which is like a, it's actually pretty similar to the Newcastle of the UK. Like it's a Steel City, like very working class. Very, it's different, classically different now. Like, I go there now and it's like, it's like a, I don't know, if I would, I would happily live there as an adult, too. But you know, I mean, when you go there now its like, why wasn't it like this when I was a kid? This looks great. I grew up in like, coal mining, like the, I only remembered this recently, and you know, when you know, something from your life is material somehow, but you don't know how like, it's not. There's not enough of a thing there. But it's just like, the fact that it existed is, when I was a kid because there was so much coal mining. There was a cartoon character called Murray the Mole, like in the newspapers and on television, who was created because kids kept falling down disused mine shafts. So they had to be like, This is Murray the Mole and he would say, if you see a hole, don't think you're a mole, run in the opposite direction and report your detection. So that's where I grew up.

Kiri 09:26

Just children falling into sinkholes all the time. So was the red hair to be sort of more easily spotted, sort of eight foot down a mineshaft?

Rhys 09:36

Yeah, I could be used as a light. I was literally a canary down a mine. But yeah. I haven't really thought about the hair before.

Kiri 09:45

So it doesn't sound like you had a particularly strong style as a kid, you were just picking bits of influence from your sister and bits that you liked to try and piece together something from that. But who was, who was dressing you? You know, when you're a little kid or when you're a teenager? Was that? Was it all coming from you? Or was it you know, a cousin or your mum?

Rhys 10:07

Like, I mean my mum, like, you know, the lazy answer to that question is like, Well my mum dressed me because I was a kid. But uh, but yeah, I think that, I guess when I was a little kid we used to wear, there was this place called Pumpkin Patch, which was like a, and that was like, pretty cute. Like a lot of people's kids wore Pumpkin Patch, and so it was a lot of denim, a lot of like, a picture of a kid in the 90s. That's what it was, like, there's so many pictures of me at McDonald's kids parties. You know, there's like an era, because we're about the same age, and I don't know if they were the same in the UK, in Australia, there was a big thing in the mid 90s, and kind of early 90s of like, kids having parties at McDonald's, and there was a very hungover, failed, like acting students, they're dressed as a clown. They didn't want to be there, and yeah, like that kind of very bright. There was a point I feel like where kids suddenly went from no, you have to look very boring to like, suddenly, in the kind of 80s and 90s kids were wearing like, lasers. Like, you know what I mean, like, lasers and bowl cuts. That was like the big like, in kind of a lot of sneakers and like, kids became almost accessories for their parents. Like you're able to kind of dress them up like a purse and be like, Yeah, but then I think, yeah I started coming back to the kind of not really having a style like I used to wear just a lot of charity shops, call them op shops in Australia, which I only found out recently is opportunity shop, which to me is like just

call it a charity shop it makes so much more sense, or thrift store. I started just wearing things like that, and I reckon it wasn't until I was like 16, like pretty late, that I started to like really think about it. Like there was what, there was a long time and I think it was probably a money thing, and I'm making it seem like we were proper poor. Like we were very poor, but not like, you know, we didn't feel that whole, that classic thing of like our parents did a very good job at making us feel like we were fine. But in retrospect, we were not. But the, I started to really think about like, and it probably happens with puberty as well that you start to kind of, your body changes, start getting feelings and start thinking, and I was quite chubby until about then as well, which I've probably had a lot to do as well, like clothes had more of a utilitarian, no that's not the right word, utility job like of, to cover me up like I was pretty, pretty chunky, and I started to lose weight about 16, and suddenly was like, Oh, I can wear like cute stuff now like skinny jeans and stuff like that and but you know, be a bit more kind of fun, started doing my hair differently and then that just kind of snowballs I think.

Kiri 13:17

When you were a kid then and you were, like you say, there's a lot of thrift shops, charity shops stuff going on, and then bits from your sister, were you ever put in something that you absolutely hated wearing?

Rhys 13:29

Oh, I mean, yeah, like, yeah, those kind of just button up, big button ups on that you would always be given by like a relative, you know, there's like, imagine, like, imagine being at our age, or just as an adult, imagine you've been given some clothes as a present. Like by a relative, not by like, I feel like it's a thing that happens within couples a lot. But I feel like when we were kids, I don't know if this is a purely my family thing. No, but like, your aunt would just kind of give you a shirt, and it's like, well, who are you to give me this? Like, who were you to be in charge of what I wear? and, like, I'm sure I've seen people do material about this, but like, then you kind of have to wear it. Like this kind of very big and it was kind of big in the 90s and early 2000s. I think of quite long shirts on boys like with quite, almost like you've, you know in movies where like the lady has had sex with the guy and she puts on his shirt. You've got like, creepy desert boys walking around. Yeah, just in these enormous kind of with flames on them or something or like really weird Rip Curl branded shirts, and I always felt very uncomfortable in those types of things, I was like this is, like and it probably comes out of, why am I being told what to do with someone I see three times a year at a family function? Like imagine that now, imagine if like I just, your aunt or uncle just gave you like a, like a pair of pants.

Kiri 15:09

But also that's properly about as many times a year as we see each other. So if we turned up in a green room, and were like, hey Rhys, here's a shirt, wear it.

Rhys 15:22

Why don't you wear it on stage tonight? I felt really guilty into doing it. Yeah, sure. Doesn't fit me at all.

Kiri 15:33

I know the exact shirt. I think it plagued all of our upbringings. We're all about the same age. Yeah, millennials. You'll all be mentally picturing those. They were weirdly long. They were weirdly long shirts.

Rhys 15:47

It was around the same time as the three quarter shorts. So it was just this strange, we're only allowed to show very small amounts of our body like but very odd parts of our body because those shirts would often come maybe a little bit below your elbow. Like it's kind of how we were all told to dress like Smash Mouth for a while. I've just realised it's the band Smash Mouth like but without the chain, like all those kind of like, kind of heavysset band like, guys in bands in the 90s with spiked hair. A lot of boys had spiked hair, frosted tips, I was lucky enough to have avoided that in my life. That moose that you can get that a lot of boys used to wear that would bleach your hair.

Kiri 16:35

Oh my gosh, I didn't know that was a thing. Crikey. I remember Sun-in that you'd put in and it would just make everyone's hair go a sort of unforgiving brassy, blonde sort of nudge into ginger territory.

Rhys 16:48

Yeah, which is kind of my real hair colour, exactly what you've just described is kind of what it is. It's kind of unforgiving is a perfect way to like, it doesn't, theres zero commitment.

Kiri 17:17

Did you have a favourite item of clothing then or an outfit when you were growing up as either a kid or a teenager that you just never wanted to take off? You're like, This is it? This is me, and I've arrived?

Rhys 17:28

I think, cuz I'm not like a big brand queen. Like if it looks good, it looks good. But I remember buying just a plain, I must have been about of that area, that 15, 16 area where I like lost a bit of weight, and I bought a, just a plain black jumper like a bit of nice knitted, fitted kind of sweater, and I, you know when you just buy one thing and it opens up a whole new suddenly, I could wear a little collared shirt. So like you know what I mean? Like, it just, sleeves rolled up. That's a look sleeves rolled down. That's a, like it's kind of, it's almost like that episode of The Simpsons where Marge makes the same suit over and over and over again. Like, but um, I was obsessed and it was, there's a brand. I think it's only in Australia called Saba, SABA, and they just make like nice normal, like simple things. But I was obsessed with it this like and I used to call it like, I would reference like my Saba, well my Saba jumper, like talk about, and this is like, poor like 15 year old boy with like really bad acne. Just like, who's just lost a bit of weight and it's just, just try it, but I loved it because it also made me feel like stylish. It was just a plain black sweater. But you know what I mean? Like it kind of suddenly, it was exactly that and it kind of it fitted me and it made me look nice, and so I was obsessed with it and I wore it to death like until it was like peeling, like it was yeah, and I still kind of do that like I still, I am glad that I think because of and I don't know if you're the same coming from a working class background but like I still do, I love to buy things but I still do wear things to death. Like I don't, I'm not wasteful yeah, I try not to be, I mean he says realising he still buys things from like Topman, and it's like well some little hands made this and it will be broken in about a week and a half.

Kiri 19:35

That should be on the label. Some little hands made this.

Rhys 19:39

Some little hands made, like that should be the little hands collection from Topman.

Kiri 19:44

When you were growing up as a teenager then, what were the big trends? We know there's, three quarter length, sort of jean short things and then an oversized flame T-shirt, but were there any other trends and did you go for them or were you, were you trying to be part of the trend? Or were you trying to cut out on your own? Or did your like body issues make you feel like you couldn't be a part of any of it?

Rhys 20:08

I think by the time so when I was 16, it would have been like 2005, and by that point, we're in like, deep emo time. Like my chemical romance, but luckily, I'm one of those people. I've just, I'm not anti music. I'm just not that interested in like, kind of, you know, my favourite band is still talking head, and so that is like, and so it's always been this like, my references are never quite right. But and so I think, I think but hey it's come back around people love David Byrne now. I was that, I'm so glad that I dodged the kind of screamo like, emo period, like when everyone had big deal. Like did you ever have a side fringe like a big?

Kiri 20:54

Cause I did.

Rhys 20:57

Yeah. Over one eye. Yeah, like a lot of the, like, a lot of head movement. I had big, long hair by that point. But it was red. So I think I was trying to move away from that, like, I wanted to look pretty simple, and I think that it probably started around there. Like I've from back then on. Because fashion got so complicated then, like it was very accessory based and very kind of like, hat on hats, literally. Belts as well. Belts and chains, and, and again, like being a, like a boy, I think is in those I mean, let's be honest, being a boy, generally, it's easier and I'm sorry about that. But the cheering during those, it wasn't me. But the, but I do continue to be part of the problem. But the, fashion is always going to be more complicated around that age for girls, I think because you, because there is a you know, you're suddenly being looked at and feeling differently surely, I'm only basing this off like and so you kind of are dressing like the way that you dress changes so drastically, I think from boys to adolescent boy, there's not that much. Like I don't know, how do I cover up my bonus, but there's not really there's not a huge difference in how you dress unless you're like and I guess you know, I was also coming to terms with my queerdom so I was kind of, I remember there was a boy at my school that used to, that was already wearing makeup and I and he kind of dressed pretty what I would say like he dressed really well and he took, not to look like he had a nice leather bag and like he probably came from a pretty wealthy family. But he was already so sure of himself to be wearing like makeup and that was like fascinating to me. I forget what your original question was because now I'm just thinking about how I wanted to wear makeup so early. No, I think, I think I did try and wander out of the trends not because I thought I was some sort of trendsetter but I think I just didn't like, I just visually didn't like them. Like all the eyeliner and all the like everyone seemed quite emo and grim and I was trying to be kind of like a

boho like, well weird like just not for, but like I had kind of pretty long shaggy hair by this not long, long but kind of like it was the shape of emo hair without the black dye or the like I had a bit of a side fringe but it was mainly to cover up all the acne on my forehead there. The, I don't know like I was in skinny jeans by this point and just a lot of white button up shirts and black sweaters like just kind of, just not boho but just kind of loosey goosey. Like, I don't know will someone kiss me please, will omeone please kiss me?

Kiri 24:09

That seems a statement in itself, if everyone else is doing the emo thing and you're kind of refusing or refuting that. So did you have a rebellious phase as you know growing up and did it, did it show up in what you're wearing?

Rhys 24:22

Probably the most rebellious thing I ever wore was to my final, so like our school dance at the end, like the year 12 dance. I did, I'd started learning to sew as well. I did textiles at school and I'd done as part of my finals major work for textiles, had made a jumpsuit. So I wore, I wore like a fire engine red jumpsuit. With like Adam Ant strip across my eyes so yeah, maybe a little rebellious, and these kind of weird boots. Like what the, and people are there like to look their best, like people are there, and if you look at a picture now, it's like all these people in really nice suits, and like, but very, you know, early 2000s, mid 2000s kind of boys with like slicked down middle parts, and like Shell necklaces on like, the like, the kind of where everyone's wearing a suit, but they look like they're going to court. Like they don't quite, like just a bunch of football players. Yes, and then there's little old Rhys Nicholson, and it was one of the first times I've wore full, wore full face before as well like, and it would look so bad because I didn't have to put foundation on. Just to cover up my pimples, and I look insane. I had like, and I made my hair really big. Like when we first met, I was probably still wearing my hair. I'd have big hair. But I used to have like a, like I used to backcomb it and a really huge, and I had it, it was kind of the beginnings of that, and so that yeah, just this bizarre, just a really bizarre look like again, we've gone back to the itemised. Okay, I'll have Adam Ant face, okay, I'll wear like, and oh, and this is the other, the jumpsuit was like, I still own it. It was embroidered, like machine embroidered, like because I'm the one thing I can, I'm terrible at reading patterns and stuff, but I can machine embroid pictures quite well, like freehand. I don't know why. It's just a skill that I for some reason have that my textiles teacher made enough of it that proved to me that I could not do anything else. She was really excited about it. She was like, Well, this is your major work, and so I wore that, that was probably my biggest rebellion in that, I think people often look back at their rebellions and go like, Oh, I could have done that better. I didn't really think the landing. But you know, it happened. It was a moment. It sounds incredible. Also like people will be looking back at those prom pictures, and there'll be a kid with a full face adamant makeup and a red, freestyle embroidered jumpsuit, and they'll be like, Who's that? and you'll be like, he's on telly now, he's famous and they'll be like of course. Yeah, of course, and that kid knew that when he was in year 12. Yeah, I mean, that. Yeah, it's a very nice thing to say, and it is, I guess it is a little bit that like, because I was always, I had a, I had a, I still have a costume box. Like as in our house, like I do love like, being out like costume parties. I was always the person going to costume parties, putting, having putting too much effort into like, you know, like you get it's like that from mean girls where you know, she turns up with all the blood all over and everyone's like, Oh, you're meant to be dressed sexy. I would have been like full latex on the face, and like seeping wounds and stuff, and

like and same thing. Like I think everyone had wanted to look, and I think that's, that's kind of it as well. Like, I've remained to want to look a bit weird. Like a bit not gross, but just like oh, it's, like I always pair my foundation is always maybe like a little, like a shade paler than it should be and like you know, this kind of like ethereal like, oddly kind of like ethereal thing like I, because why is that so wankier? But like why look like everyone else? Like it seems very boring. I love that. The idea of being like otherly. Like is, is that Kate Blanchett up there?

Kiri 28:48

The style that you have now, which is so clear, like you could just, you could draw you and leave a blank face and people would know who it was what, what age did that style start showing up?

Rhys 28:59

When I started doing stand up. I used to just wear kind of like, there's early pictures of me with like, I started, it started with like big hair, then I started wearing makeup because I had bad skin, and then that kind of developed into just realising. I don't know if you're the same with this, like, we both like to dress up. Do you remember the bill? Like I started at the Sydney Comedy Store, and they'd be like 12, 14 people on the bill. If you're the one with the big hair, and the full face of makeup on, people are going to remember you like, you know, early on, I wasn't very good. But people remembered me like I kind of rose the ranks pretty quickly in Sydney comedy, and, you know, I learned how to do comedy pretty quick but I think partly because I was really loud on stage, and I was very, I was something to look at. Like there was a lot going on. So people booked me for things because they remembered who I was.

Kiri 29:57

That is literally the exact same reason that I wear sequins because I was like, I don't think there's anything particularly special about me on stage. But I can be the one that they remember. If I'm, I always wear something shiny, and I look like I've made the effort, and it does work, because, you know, I was a woman as well. So that's, you know, part of a sort of marginalised group in comedy. But I felt like they were getting something extra.

Rhys 30:22

I think I was the same, and it's not comparable in any way. But also, like, as a queer comic, like it was kind of, it stopped now luckily, but there's a thing when you know, and I've only been a comedian for 12 years, and you still then kind of had to make a joke about it. Like you still, whereas you know, I go in a comedy club here in Melbourne, and the kind of newer comic, gay comics coming up and queer comics kind of don't, it's very nice, like, in such a short amount of time, it's changed where the audience isn't expecting, and I'd say it must be the same, or was the same. There's something about like, a lot of my female, comic friends would have to come out on the stage and kind of weirdly address, even like, you know, and I guess to a lot of degrees, that still absolutely happens. But for from my point of view, for a queer comic, you don't necessarily have to, looking the way that I did, I didn't have to do the kind of like, standard, you might be thinking something, you might Oh, you know, what's, what's the cross between this and this doing on stage like, you know, that, that's classic joke structure, and then kind of, as I just made a little bit more money, not from comedy, but just having day jobs and stuff as well, I was able to, like, buy a blazer, and because I'd always loved suits and stuff, but could not afford them, and like, then started to and then you know, so it ends up I'm wearing the same suit for like three years, like exactly

just the same. There's, you can look at kind of three years of me performing and I'm wearing exactly the same thing. Because I just couldn't afford anything else. But the, and then it slowly just develops into I remember thinking even when I was, because I started when I was 18. When I was like 20. I remember just being like, imagine if I had enough suits that I could wear a suit, like every day, I'd just be one of the people who just wears a suit every day, and as I've gotten older, it's like, well, that sounds like a fucking nightmare. I don't have to wear a suit every day. Like, I don't know if you're the same as well. But it's not that we've painted ourselves into a corner. But we've really kind of created a look and a style for ourselves of what we do on stage, and now sometimes I'm like, I have rules now. My own self and, and this sounds so like, woe is me performer. But like, if I'm doing 10 minutes of new material somewhere, I'm not wearing a suit. Like I'm not, like I'll put on a face and I'll wear like nice. Yeah, exactly like the, whereas then it used to be like, if I'm on stage for three minutes, I need to have everything like down to the, and that's I think that's what kind of made me a notable act in Sydney at the time is because I'd be in a bucket of shit comedy club, or like bad. I loved being like at a pub gig in a suit. I don't know, like, Who's this old woman trapped inside this little boy? But its subversive that you're turning up to these like, you know, circuit dogshit gigs that we do to get good at comedy, and you are rocking up like, oh, I'm playing. I'm playing the Opera House. Yeah, and I will. Like I'm just dressing for it. Well do you think of makeup as part of your outfit then? It is exactly that, and then, and now I love a suit, like every, it used to be every year, I would buy like before Melbourne Comedy Festival, which is kind of our big festival here, and then it kind of turned into Edinburgh as well, I'd buy a suit. Like there was a moment where it turned into costume. Like it went from kind of like, this is what I want to look like on stage to like, this is what I look like on stage. I always think of my stage persona is like a what I wished I'd said like in that moment like it kind of, it's a, he's a lot smarter than me, like me on stage, and so that's why the suits are a lot sharper than me, like it's kind of in my dream scenario. This is what my skin looks like. This is what my bone structure is. This is what my clothes are all the time and so this is what, this is who you imagine I am and there's something really like, I think that's what clothes should do. I think. I think so. Yeah. Because I don't, I used to, I used to wear it the way that I wear it on stage now all the time, and it's funny how that's also toned down. Like have you toned down as like, I feel like I've, as I've worked out my style more. I've refined it more, and so the kind of I used to wear the like, you know, we both love very bright like kind of fun things. But now they're like, it became more less loud for me and more. I don't know, like refined, I guess is the word. Like it wasn't to get attention anymore. It was like to kind of keep up appearances.

Kiri 35:17

Interesting, I think with me. It's not necessarily toned down, but it has become less like something someone else would have. Yeah. So I started to get more stuff made for myself and less high street stuff. So I'm not necessarily, that's not a looking down on it. I just go more vintage stuff, because I guess I wanted to, because the whole thing is like, Oh, look at me, and I'm a peacock. But I don't, I don't want there to be another peacock sat in the audience.

Rhys 35:48

Like I think peacocking is the perfect way to put it like because peacocks don't look rough like, and I used to look rough. Like even though I was wearing a suit and stuff I looked like I didn't look like it wasn't well put together. But now I feel like, and look, and I'll probably look back on myself in 5, 10 years and be like, What the fuck was I wearing? But you know, even down to the point, I'm making a

conscious effort at the moment to learn how to do makeup that isn't so, Jesus Christ, like on stage, it will always be like pretty heavy. But you know, if I want to go to something like, I don't know, if it's like some sort of work do where there might be photos and stuff. Not to look like I'm wearing, it's like what you see stage actors like wearing their stage makeup backstage at something and you're like, Oh, this is for a big room. This is not for an up close photo. But yeah, I think to answer your question I do think of makeup as part of my, part of all of my clothes because I think it's just as, I think without makeup on I look quite strange in a suit. I look I can run a court like, and maybe that's what, I just what I'm used to, and my, I have quite patchy skin, I always have, I still get like it's kind of not too bad at the moment. But I just have like redness and it just doesn't look right to me. It doesn't look bad. I'm not like, oh, I perform with makeup not on all the time if I'm doing new material shows and stuff. But I think a full suit with, if I was to see you at something and I had no makeup on and a full suit on, you'd be like, this looks strange. You wouldn't tell me. But it would be like, it would look odd. Like imagine, like think of yourself, like imagine wearing a ball gown.

Kiri 37:38

It looks bizarre and like because that's what, when you go and do a telly thing and they ask what you want done with your makeup, I'm like, go full drag queen on the eyes, and you can see they're sort of like, because they're used to doing sort of like a natural eye. But I'm like I cannot wear you know, like toe to neck sequins and have some plain smoky eye. Yeah, it has to be as bold as everything else. Otherwise your face looks like an apology.

Rhys 38:04

I often just to save time, I do it less now but in the early days, I would just do my own makeup. Because it was like they were never going to get me to the Joan Crawford levels, and I think in these telly shows, they also, if you're a boy, they build in a certain amount of time to the schedule, a time that old Rhys'y needs a little longer, and it's kind of what I call like commentator makeup like football commentator makeup where they like, yeah, it's just kind of like take the red out and make me kind of match and it's like no madam. No no, the amount of times I've had to be like, we've got to keep building. Like it's yeah, I can still see my original skin, we need to change.

Kiri 38:52

Are there any trends that you've tried to pull off that aren't happening?

Rhys 38:57

I'd love to be able, I mentioned them earlier I think, those like high waist. So when I was a teenager my favourite band was, until kind of into my 20s as well, was the scissor sisters, and not a great band for my lisp. But the guitar player in that band, Del Markey, I was so horny for him when I was a teenager and he used to wear these like high waisted kind of 70s pants and it's a big, there's a big Gucci campaign at the moment. They kind of their last couple seasons have been very kind of very queer centric, bowl cut men with like, big wide lapels and long jackets and high waisted pants, and I just don't have that you know, like, again, it's all about body positivity and there's no rules and the blow up but I would look objectively bad in those pants. Like I just wouldn't look good in them. I don't have the right shape for them and it's not about a weight thing. It's not about, it's just the body that I have was not built for high waisted pants and I need to accept that. It's like the kind of see, I wish I could look like the kind

of festival gay man, I don't want to be buff. I've never had a want to be buff. There's a specific type of shirt, and like the guys that wear it's free english. Kind of like boshers shoes and shorts and like a kind of wide collar. You seeing a lot of gay guys like big music festivals and stuff wearing them with me talking in broad generalisations. Yeah, and it's like, I'd love to look like that. I don't, and that's fine. But I'd love to look like that. But I think yeah, high waisted pants are probably a big thing that I would wish I could wear. There's something very, I don't know, there's something very sexy about like, it's very Bowie, very kind of to wear these very figure hugging kind of pants and it's very, it doesn't leave much to the imagination, and I don't mind that either.

Kiri 40:50

I love it. I think that's kind of 70s man like Freddie Mercury, Rod Stewart, like Mark Boland. Like, I just think that they looked gorgeous, really masculine, but like with kind of feminine shapes and fabrics, and I just think that that is the, and Elton John has all that. It's like the apex of fashion. I'm always trying to look like a man from the 70s.

Rhys 41:14

Yes, like Bowie, of course, like his, I used to call myself the thin white douche. Like because he's that exact era of him as well. It's very, like the Thin White Duke is probably kind of what I looked like when I was about 22. I was very skinny, I had a heavy contour, and I used to wear just like a lot of white suits. I loved, I went through a stage of like pale suits.

Kiri 41:39

Well, I think that's why when I thought of you, I was like, oh, pale blue suit, and I think it's because I'm mixing you in that, way up in my mind.

Rhys 41:47

Yeah, yeah, I'm very similar. You know, we have very similar careers. I will also my, my last, my last release will be kind of a 10 minute long, strange cryptic song about me dying.

Kiri 42:01

That will be the last set that ever gets released of mine will be a 10 minute Deathrattle of me dying in a club somewhere and everyone goes, no one knew she was ill during this. The signs were there.

Rhys 42:11

Deathrattle what a great last show title.

Kiri 42:17

Is there an item of clothing that you've hung on to for years that you that you still love now, or do you, do you rotate stuff?

Rhys 42:24

Yeah I mean, my like, if I'm not in a suit for work, I'm usually in like, pretty polite. Like, I wear black skinny jeans, I have a pair of black sneakers that I wear, and I either am wearing black and white stripey shirts. Like my, again, my closet look makes me look like a sociopath because it's about 12

black and white stripey shirts. But there is a particular one. That is like a perfect black and white. Like my partner always teases me because I'm constantly chasing the high, and it's just, it's a fucking plain black and white stripey shirt. But it's like, a perfect, like that sailor cut where it's kind of doesn't cling at the bottom, it kind of goes out a little bit, and just a plain shirt and what a boring answer I'm giving you but it's I think it is often these. It's not. It's not for everyone, like oh, for most people, I'd say it's not like a fur coat. It's not this thing. It's usually like, you put on accidentally a dumb thing once, like just a regular piece of clothing and you're like, oh, do you know what I mean, there's like, it makes me, it's both the simplest thing that I put on, but it also, I feel quite, I feel kind of attract, I do feel attractive in it. Like it's just a, it's just a plain black and white stripy shirt, but it makes me feel like a kind of Yves Saint Laurent kind of, which I don't think you meant to put the T in. That's the most Australian thing I've ever, Yves Saint Laurent, yeah, there's kind of Yves Saint Laurent kind of frenchie kind of vibes, and it's a boring answer, but it is, I've held, this is one shirt that I reckon I've had for like close to a decade, which is a long life for a shirt of that kind.

Kiri 44:07

It really is. Do you think you'll get to the point where you'll just ask, go to a tailor and be like, make me a dozen of these, please?

Rhys 44:14

I would love to like if I, I would love to be the point, same with suits where because there's a brand that I like in Australia called Jack London, and they just like, they just fit me and stuff. But I would love to be one of those people that goes to a place and just gets all their clothes made. Like it feels very like again, it's that kind of Talented Mr. Ripley era of like, it was very kind of social anything where you go to a tailor and they just make you a summers worth of clothes, and imagine that, imagine making all your choices, I'm a big, I'm big on that as well. Like I love that a lot of my clothes are the kind of the same like my day to day clothes because it just means I can get up and put on like there's things that make me feel good and there's clothes that I feel good looking in, but they're very the same. Like it's just kind of the same thing over and over and over again, which makes me sound boring. But it also just means like, anytime I do wear something different, like it means when I wear suits for work, it feels like a little party, like I, they're the, my full outlet of that, and then day to day is like, you know, cuz I think you're probably the same, like, do you, I forget, do you live in London, or do you?

Kiri 45:23

No I live in Wales now. But I was, it was sort of Manchester and London as where I was splitting my time. Yeah, but I've moved back to where I'm from now.

Rhys 45:30

It's like the day to day, hustley. Like when things are normal and you're like you running around a city, you kind of don't want to be in a big costume. It's sometimes when I see people, like when I was younger, and I think it's an age thing when I was younger. My dream was to be one of those people that looks done up to the nines all fucking times, and as I get older, I'm like, that sounds so exhausting. Like to have to keep, to have to keep my face good on the tube all day. Like, whenever I see someone who's really beautifully done up on a train or something. I'm always like, you're 22, you will learn.

Kiri 46:06

I think you have rich parents.

Rhys 46:08

This gets hard. Yeah, exactly that, exactly that, you're not having an awkward time. You're meant to be having an awkward time right now. Everyone looks like kind of, everyone looks like, it is, it is interesting, I think the generation just below us. It's not a privileged thing, because, you know, no generation has more, like each generation has their own ups and downs. But in terms of dress sense, I think there is, we're in a very queer time and I really covet it like very, even you walk past I feel like just giving weird ads for Topman. But very like, bowl cuts, bleached hair like they kind of look like, I don't know how to say this but, in Australia, they almost, fashion at the moment, looks like poor people in the 90s, and I don't mean that as like it is a very, it's a style of like tracksuits and big joggers and stuff. It's very interesting to me, I think we were a very lush time.

Kiri 47:08

Yeah, well its because we came off the back of boom, bust 80s which is about showing your money, and then when that, by the time that trickled down to sort of, you know, like working class people it was about like showing oh well like, opulence in a way of like, we can afford these things, and that's why brands became very important, and now I think everyone's acknowledging privilege, and examining it so everyone wants to look like they have no money in case somebody accuses them of sort of coasting to where they are.

Rhys 47:38

Like I find the most fascinating piece of fashion at the moment is the enormous jogger. Like the really bit like, you can go to like Selfridges and see like a pair of \$600 sneakers that are like, not like, they're just chunky, you know what, do you know the ones that I mean, they're kind of like, they've just got, there's so much rubber and they look like baby spices wearing them, but they're like, and they're just so, and you see that these like very tiny little, almost goth people wear them like just very anaemic queer kids on a train, just with the, like they're about to be chucked into a river by the mob with big heavy shoes.

Kiri 48:22

It's the massive feeler almost like bubbly Emma Bunton kind of shoe. Yeah, it's very in, it's lovely. I love to see it. I also think that maybe being a teenager, I just think how literate all teenagers are now or can be with makeup would have been such a gift when I was growing up. I mean, it would have meant constantly being bollocked in school for wearing too much makeup. But you just hate so much of your face, and you obsess over your skin and stuff as a teenager. So to be able to manage that would have felt I think very exciting.

Rhys 48:55

Yeah and eyebrows, like eyebrows are back, which I think is a great thing. Eyebrows were not back when we were kids.

Kiri 49:11

Is there an era that that you wish you existed in just for the fashion? Is it that sort of 50s, are we talking about?

Rhys 49:18

I think so. Yeah. I think late 50s into the early 60s. Because also that early 60s as well is that, you know those movies like kind of Shirley MacLaine movies as well that kind of the very, there was a while where the men weren't buff anymore. Like a lot of the kind of screen star men were kind of little, little kind of guys, and it's kind of, we're seeing it again with people like John Mulaney, the way that he wears suits and the way that he looks at specials is kind of, and you know some would say if you were to watch my special on Netflix, its pretty close, colouring wise, didn't do it on purpose. But that kind of era of sports jackets and, and suits that are just very classically and beautifully, they don't go in, they just kind of go down, and yeah, like everything, I do often think though God everyone must have stunk in those days, like when you watch shows like Mad Men, because I was a pack a day smoker for a long time as well, and I loved smoking, and I have quit, and I'm better for it. But when I was in a suit, like any picture of me somewhere, I found a Polaroid recently, kind of a dick of me somewhere like it was backstage somewhere at something, and I was in a suit and I was smoking, and I, I gotta say, I looked really good. Like it's, and also Polaroids do wonders. But I was in like, a nice like, teal like deep teal. No that doesn't sound good. But like it kind of oceany blue suit smoking, and it looked like the 60s, and I just think early 60s clothes. Kind of also, Rose Matafeo, is someone that talks a lot about that era of styles where like, it really worked for both men and women. Men were getting more, there was a bit more fun for men in that era like, and clothes were very flattering, but not deeply uncomfortable for women I think, like we're getting to that era of no longer like, it's not the perfect teeny tiny waist of the 50s, it's more kind of these flat down kind of dresses, and yeah, no, I think it's yeah, really interesting time. Early 60s, I reckon. But you know, less, less gay bashing. Less murder. Not none but just less. Yeah, less. Boys. Can we just lower it please?

Kiri 51:59

Have you got an item of clothing that you put on and you just instantly feel just great in?

Rhys 52:04

There is a suit. It's that suit. I was just talking about, the one that I was smoking in, and look, it probably doesn't. I haven't tried it on recently. It doesn't. Probably doesn't fit at the moment. Lockdown. A lot of wine, a lot of cheese. But you know, if maybe I put on some shapewear, does men's shapewear exist, surely?

Kiri 52:28

Yes, absolutely.

Rhys 52:30

Okay, I need to quickly do some Googling. There's a kind of, it's a suit that I, doesn't really look great anymore, because it's kind of a bit worn. So I don't wear it anymore. But I still keep it and I think that's, I'm not keeping it for any reason. But it's just a kind of like, wait, I realise it's, like what colour would you call that?

Kiri 52:53

Well, to me, it looks sort of like a almost a teal colour, it's beautiful.

Rhys 52:58

It's a full suit. It's a teal and it doesn't look great. It needs the steam. I wore it on Conan. I wore it on a bunch of TV stuff. Like it was just a suit that I clearly put on once and was like, Oh, this is it, and it's a 60s cut. Like it kind of does that thing where it goes down and then straight.

Kiri 53:16

Two button. Yeah. 60s. Yeah, great.

Rhys 53:18

Yeah, it doesn't go in. It doesn't go in at the waist.

Kiri 53:22

So nice. Oh, so it's just straight down.

Rhys 53:27

This is what I've always wanted to talk about on a podcast, and yeah I, for a long time that was, I put it on and it was just like, this is exactly what I want to look like. Like this is exactly how I feel, like want to feel and want to look.

Kiri 53:41

Especially doing something as huge as Conan as well, but you want to put something on where you're like I don't have to, my outfit I'm not gonna have to worry about it. It's just going to deliver and I'm going to look exactly how I want other people to see me and it just takes a massive extraneous variable out of your brain.

Rhys 53:56

Yeah, and I kind of had a like yeah, it wasn't something I really thought about. Like I just knew I was gonna wear that, and I wanted to look like, almost like I was doing the tonight show in the 60s. You know, like I wanted it to look like that kind of and I realised a second ago the reason I brought up Rose Matafeo is because she did Conan about a month before me and she wore this incredible like, not necessarily 60s, this is more kind of 70s maybe but it's like really, and it occurred to me it's like, I hope she doesn't hear this because it makes me sound so like I've such a platonic and career and style crush on her, because she does this thing that's like very era themed but not specific to an era, like you know what, like, you know she wore something like that and I've never seen her wear something like that before but it fit perfectly and it's such a, it's such a swing. Like to wear something like that on a current like, I don't know, a very current show where he's wearing like denim, and then she's wearing this like 70s kind of, yeah.

Kiri 55:12

So it's a two piece, isn't it? It's a dress and a little jacket in the same material, and it's sort of like, sort of like a check, but it's cut on the horizontal of like, Baby Blue and sort of like a peach, and it is just great.

Because you're so right, it has that look of looking like, looking vintage and looking like there was kind of like and introducing to the show. It's she's gonna be a big star, it's Rose Matafeo. Yeah, it's so perfect.

Rhys 55:40

That's kind of what I was like, as well. I didn't wear, I wore just a nice, plain suit with a plain black tie. But I felt very like, like I could have a whiskey after work, and like, undo my tie. It's just, I like, I like people that, in comedy, because I think we work in an industry that isn't known for our fashion swings. Like usually when you see people on a Tonight Show or a talk show like that, or you know, any kind of like, telly stuff, we're just, you know, it's usually just, if it's a guy in his 40s or 50s. He's got a plain jacket on with like a bright shirt, and then often ladies are wearing kind of, you know, just like a nice thing. Yeah, but to be able to wear like, no, we are on television. Do you see what people wear in like, I don't know, what are those shows? There's kind of 50s black and white TV shows like when you know, Lucille Balls on something. They're in a bowl gown? Because its television. Like, you know, dress up like you're going on a flight in the 40s.

Kiri 56:52

I was about to say it's like how people used to dress when they used to fly. We were chatting earlier about glasses, because when I first met you, you always used to wear glasses on stage, and I have just found out that you don't need them.

Rhys 57:11

Yeah, I'm having so many people realise this shameful fact about me. Because I used to wear them, and it was like a development. I just wore them once, like onstage and who knows whether it was, whether it was because of the glasses or not, but it just kind of worked a bit better. Like with the, there was just something about the suit that I was wearing and having glasses on and with the big hair. It just kind of was just another little piece of the puzzle, and for close to a decade I wore them and only about a year and a half two years ago did I stop wearing them. Because it just started to feel a bit like, and I never, yeah, they never had lenses in them. They never, like they were never meant to be like, I wear glasses. They were always meant to be almost, like onstage I would sometimes wipe my eye absent mindedly like through them. But it was just another I did have a lady after a show once say to me that it was similar to having a fake wheelchair and I don't think it's quite on the level of that. I'm pretty bonkers, right? But yeah, just with my fashion wheelchair, the, like not ideal, but it was another way that I could, I had like 10 pairs, like I used to, they're all different like you know, different suits had different glasses and they were just another little, I love an accessory Kiri, I love just like a, you know plump something out with a fun little, like at the moment I'm obsessed with bolo ties at the moment and they are such a swing like, like a fun, yeah just like a little, they like, and it's so doesn't suit the rest of me, and that's what I love about them, like it looks like I'm like some gay rancher.

Kiri 58:54

I love it, I think they're great.

Rhys 58:55

But yeah, glasses. I know, I just kind of stopped. I don't know what it was, I just started to, you know, when you wear something for a long time and then you very suddenly become embarrassed of it. Like it was a very visceral, like a, I put them on once and was like, it's weird you do this, and took them off and didn't wear them at that show that night, and the amount of people that I've known for the better part of a decade that were like, oh did you get laser or something? So clearly like I thought the whole time that I was being very clear that I don't wear real glasses, and then you know people like cuz yeah, everyone very close to me knew, and it's not like, it was just a weird, I think it would have been weirder if I, if they had lenses and I pretended that I needed them or something like that you know that's some strange, you know when you meet someone that your like, Oh, what a weird liar you are like, these weird little lies? Like people that lie about their height, I love that, I love people lie about their height. It's such a fun like, I can see you.

Kiri 59:56

I can tell by the doorframe you're stood next to, that you're lying to me right now.

Rhys 1:00:04

Like, you know, I can see you yeah, like, you know, like you exist 3d now.

Kiri 1:00:11

That's fun. So the idea was the glasses was sort of like, you thought you were doing it in a wink wink kind of this is a fun, sort of like, I don't know, a sainted symbol or, yeah, costume, and then the fact that people are taking it at face value, and then you're like, oh, no, I'm not doing that and then it just becomes very embarrassing.

Rhys 1:00:29

Yeah. Like, it just played into the character of it. Like it's not, I don't think that they made me look smarter, but they definitely made me look more period. Like of period or more kind of like, it just played into the, I can't explain it. It's weird.

Kiri 1:00:45

Can I ask to jump away from that slightly, what your relationship is like with shopping? Are you someone who wants to be there touching the stuff? Or is it online? Do you enjoy it? Or is it an absolute chore for you?

Rhys 1:00:58

I love it, but also because of my upbringing, I really agonise over things, like I said, I love buying the, I love the feel, I do get the rush. Like do you get the rush of spending money on something?

Kiri 1:01:17

Yeah, I'm a total one for acquisition, I find very validating.

Rhys 1:01:21

Yes, yes, and will often overpay for things like things that I know are overpriced, but I will still be like, well, this is, you can afford this, and I can't, often I can't. But there is something about you know, we do

get to our lives, we are making a little bit more money, and like we have a really, I think the jobs that we have, are not useful for our type of disease. Because when it rains, it pours, and then there's a drought, and then it pours, and then there's a drought. So when we, at the business that we work in we, when we do make money sometimes, out of nowhere, it's quite a bit of money for quite a small amount of work, and I think that's what people think it always is. But then you don't get paid again for a long time. But our brains don't know that, and so I will, like you know, I'm lucky that my partner and I say this with deep respect, he comes from money, and so he knows how to manage it, but it also means that he, he doesn't like shopping because he doesn't love poring over things and he doesn't love like when we go to, if I, I love to like look in a store for a long time in that kind of very, and I think part of it comes from op shopping like through charity shops is because you have to pour over it, you have to really trawl through to find the good stuff. Whereas if you come from money, this is a broad generalisation. But you kind of go into a store and find what you need, get out. and no I love the, I love the trawl and I love the finding, you know looking through things and trying on everything and but then I'll often, when a few years ago, it's a little bit better now that I've got like a little bit more money, but I would try on a suit. This is how I used to buy suits, I would, which is already a very privileged, this is how I buy suits. Pretty privileged sentence, but I would try it on at the start of the season.. and wait until it was like half price or like a third off or something at the end, which is like a very common thing, obviously. But it just means like I'm thinking about that suit for like six months. Just always like 'you will be mine baby' like sometimes I go in there like two or three times and try it on and be like 'just you wait'.

Kiri 1:03:47

But also it means you're, you must if you still love it six months later, you're gonna love it in another six months.

Rhys 1:03:53

Absolutely. Yeah, the blue, the blue suit though that, that was like a, that was I went in, I was like, and I remember thinking I don't think I could afford it at the time. But I like made those weird little bargains you make in your brain that are like well just don't eat I guess. I guess this is a no food month.

Kiri 1:04:21

Do you think about, do you think about sort of sustainability and things like that when you're, when you're shopping for stuff?

Rhys 1:04:27

I mean, I should. Yes, yes, and I think, I think it gets easier. Horribly it's easier if you have a little bit more money. Like you can look wealthier. It's like this weird switch like where you, you buy from those kind of high street shops, you know, Topman and all those kind of things that are very cheap and they look good for like a little while but they are not good. Like they're very throw out kind of stuff like that. They don't last long and they, but then the more kind of well made things they last longer, but they also don't look, they don't have that kind of new, you're wearing something for longer so it doesn't look new, if that makes sense. Like it doesn't, and so they're, yeah, I don't know, I try and be, yes, I think as I've gotten a little bit more, but then nothing like a pandemic to really kick you in the money dick. But I try my hardest and I think like everyone, it's a constant struggle of like, you know, yeah, I do, I still do. I still charity shop. Like it's still some of my favourite things, and then it's a weird thing, isn't it? Where

sometimes you go to a charity shop now and there are like Primark and Topman things in the charity shop. Like, like, it's so throw out so quickly that you're like, oh, this was, this was like from two years ago. I'll have this Sure. But yeah, I try to be as much as possible. But then I am also one of those people. I hate clutter, and so I find myself checking out things a lot, but I always donate them. It's a vicious cycle. I don't know. I try.

Kiri 1:06:05

There's no accusations here. It's just, cause some people...

Rhys 1:06:08

Fuck you. You're trying to trap me.

Kiri 1:06:12

I'm trying to cancel you and this is one of my avenues.

Rhys 1:06:14

Yeah, gotcha journalism.

Kiri 1:06:17

Well, no, because I think some people don't think about it at all, and that's absolutely fine, and, and also, there's the conversation about like, it's incredibly hard for plus sized people to shop affordably, in things they like that are sustainable. So it's, it's a generic question. Don't you worry about it, babes. It's not accusatory. I love that you still go to charity shops, have you got a particular favourite thing, something that you've picked up either from a charity shop or a secondhand shop?

Rhys 1:06:43

Yeah, just like accessories. I think some of the best, especially like in Australia in regular times, you can do a lot of kind of regional touring, and I'd say it must be the same in the UK, and you can find yourself in a charity shop that some, like I've gotten some of my best ties like just regular ties or like couple of Blazers as well. Where clearly like a stylish man has died in town, and that old lady running the charity shop doesn't know how much these are worth. Like I remember buying, I bought 10 ties once, these really great 60s kind of skinny pretty like abstract. Very, not polyestery, but like very, just very kind of classy, nice, simple colours, and they like if they were in a different, you noticed the difference between a charity shop and a vintage shop. Like if some 29 year old girl working in a ? had her mits on these ties, they would have been like 40 bucks each. But because this nice charity shop lady is like I don't know, Harry died, and his wife dropped off his ties and so we were selling them for \$1 each and I bought 10 ties for \$1 each and they're ties that I wear like all the time. LA charity shops are like something to be, like they just, they're like museums like because it also, there's just so much, as a country, I feel like America is such a consumer country, and they're always like chucking shit out, and so their, their op shops are like some of the best, I've gotten all my bolo ties, because in Australia, it's quite hard to find a bolo tie. Then you go to America and they're like, Yeah, I got like 1000. Do you want to trawl through them? I don't know. Yeah, like that. I love the, I do it a lot in Edinburgh as well. It's like my calming thing during the fringe if I go to like some of those little vintage stores around Bristo square, and everything's overpriced but there's, you can spend a good hour or two in a place, and just forget

about the horror of that festival. Like you know, in the cabinets in a charity shop like those front bits, the things that they're, as if they're trying to keep like secret for it like, like people will steal these, and they just like usually a pair of earrings that are missing the pearls. Finding a, finding some good like a lapel pin or something in there is pretty fun.

Kiri 1:09:14

Yeah. Next to sort of royal commemorative mug. Every now and then there'll be something very beautiful.

Rhys 1:09:20

Then something like and then you kind of like, oh is this, is this like memorabilia of like the Second World War? Let's no it doesn't matter. Doesn't matter. Doesn't matter.

Kiri 1:09:29

Is that an eagle on that?

Rhys 1:09:30

Yes, like would you call that an eagle or an owl, what is that do you think, maybe it's a hawk?

Kiri 1:09:42

S to finish up, we're gonna ask you about your style moving forward, the future. Can you see it changing or do you think you have, because you have such a definitive look, do you, and it's timeless as well. Do you think the look you have now is your look forever?

Rhys 1:09:56

I often think the hair is probably gonna have to change at some point. Like, only because you see very old men with like dyed hair, and it's pretty like, oh boy. But then how do I know, and sometimes I must be going, my partner is going pretty grey already, and we're only like, we're in our early 30s, I think that'll have to change, and I think the same with the fit. Like, there's something to be said for, I want to age. I want to do my best. I mean, everyone does, but I want to do my best to age kind of gracefully. But then you see someone like, I don't know. Ian McKellen's like a weird one who like, the, oh no, do you know what, Peter O'Toole. These like very old men who look drunk all the time. All the time. They just look drunk and kind of, but he would like, I remember there's clips of Peter O'Toole with ? and he almost, I almost, I think if it was to change, I want to be, I want to become more stately, if that makes sense. Like, because also I quite love being and we're a little bit the same. I think it's like I like being dressed up, and also be, I'm quite dirty on stage, and there's something to be, I love how clean I look, and how dirty I am, and I think as the older I get, I would like to be more. Yeah, I don't want to be like a creepy old man. But I would love to be kind of more stately.

Kiri 1:11:29

Yeah, I could see you in sort of a smoking jacket and a cravat.

Rhys 1:11:33

Yeah, yeah, just with holding a big book for no reason. But then I also like, because I'm also I've have quite a few tattoos, and so I don't know how that's gonna, that's been like a weird thing that's grown over that. There's always something, it sounds so silly, but I quite like, this is so performative. But having like a bunch of tattoos under a suit, there's something kind of secret about it, and I want to keep going, I want to have quite a few tattoos, and part of it is people say like, what are people gonna think when you're old? It's like, I want them to be like, Wow, that guy really committed to a look. Like I, I kind of want to because I think we'll be the first generation of a lot of old people.

Kiri 1:12:15

Heavily tattooed.

Rhys 1:12:16

With tattoos and that's gonna look really strange.

Kiri 1:12:21

I yeah, I can't wait to see that. I just thought about that. Because there wasn't really a generation before, they had the odd one, you know, sailors tattoos. Yeah, but I think yeah, we will be the first heavily inked geriatrics, excited for it.

Rhys 1:12:32

Yeah, without like a scary reason.

Kiri 1:12:35

Scary reason! Is there an item of clothing, you can always see yourself wearing?

Rhys 1:12:43

Black and white stripey shirts. Broadly speaking suits, like, I just think they're such a status symbol in probably some deeply horrible ways. But I love that they're always going to be, I love this kind of, you know, I have some different gender stuff going on as well. So I can always have a, like wearing a suit with a full face is like a really fun thing to do. Like there is a bit of like a, that's pretty that's a pretty predominantly masculine stereotypically masculine thing with a with a pretty big lash, and I think there's just, you can, suits you can wear when you're a little kid and you can wear them when you're very old., and I think there's like a, and they, and suits change with you like, and they mean different things as you get older, and I really like, I'm talking really broadly, the concept of a suit is pretty broad, but they are really, there is a, there's a, because of the history, there's just a status to them, and I wish I wasn't addicted to that status but I've walked into places that I should not have been because of the suits that I wear like I've literally walked into the Sydney Opera House before on a night that my friend was doing a show, and she had, and that whole, this is very boring for people to see probably but there's a situation sometimes when you know you're allowed to go backstage but you're not on a list to go backstage but anyways, Bla bla bla, I just walked in and no one stopped me because I had a suit on. It's like walking somewhere with a ladder. Like no one's stopping the guy with a ladder because he's probably meant to be here, and yeah, so I think suits, I don't know if that's a boring answer, but I don't think I'll ever stop wearing them. I hope not. I'm gonna have a look with my nappy.

Kiri 1:14:33

Are there any trends that you're hoping never come back?

Rhys 1:14:36

Oh, fascism. Gee, I know, I really, as I said it, I was like jokingly said it, I was like no, no that doesn't work. Too late baby. I think like the, I was never big Ugg boot guy. I always think that was like the kind of fashion Ugg boots, and I don't know if that, you know, it's a look, it's the footwear of my people in two ways both the working class and Australians. I just think I am, I wish I wasn't this way, but you know, the way that I've spoken so much about I like being overdressed places. I fucking hate someone to be underdressed somewhere like it does. Like, not in a classist way, but in just the kind of like, whatever your version of dressed up is, there are like places to be dressed up, like I remember I went, one of the nicest thing that's ever gotten to happen was I got painted for the archibald. It's the single the archibald which is kind of, it's not the Turner Prize, but it's kind of it's a portrait. Artists paint portraits of people that work in the media or kind of other artists and like, you know, artsy people, and 1000s of people enter it and then they, you get hung in the gallery of, one of the Gallery of New South Wales it's like ? and I got painted for it, and I'm wearing a suit in it, and we got to go to this gala opening. Like it felt like, it looked like, it felt like the Met Gala. It wasn't, but it felt like just everyone, you know, Australia's arts community highest level and social climbers were all in one room, just looking at art, and then amongst people, like people were in like huge furs and like really dressed up and then they were just a few like just douchey artists who were dressed as if they're just come from painting. Like there was a guy literally in overalls with like paint on the front of them, and I remember just being like, who do you think you are? Like, because, like, what a weird, but like, again, it comes back to that kind of performative. It's like I know we're wrapping up but, people trying, people of money trying to look poor is so funny to me and weird, and when you go to, I feel like when you go to a nice restaurant or you go somewhere classy. The people dressed up the most are the poorest people in the room and the people not dressed up are the, are always like, and you can always tell by shoes. Like I remember being somewhere it was like Rodeo Drive or somewhere in LA, and I was in like, I might have been like in a family run store, and I like dressed up to go shopping in nice shops, like I wasn't in a suit, but I wanted to look nice. Because you almost I think feel, I feel like if you grew up like we did, you feel a bit worried that people are going to, like you can have a pretty woman moment, like people are gonna be like, not in here. But then you notice there's like people that look homeless, were like walking around the store, but they've got like, \$500 sneakers on, and you're like, ah, like, that's, I don't know, there's just like something and that guy at the, I'm rambling a lot. But that guy, that exhibition just made me think like, you probably, your parents are probably in publishing. You grew up in a really big house, on the water in Sydney, and you are trying to seem like you didn't grow up this way. By looking like you just came from painting a house, and it's so bizarre.

Kiri 1:18:22

Yeah, it is. That's something I've noticed. Yeah, that's a lot of the people I speak to on this as a weird sort of byproduct. But I think if you grew up with not a lot of money around, when you make it, you dress, you always err on the side of being overdressed, and then I think people who have grown up with access and money always sort of compensate by under dressing, and I think that may be from an extreme confidence of no one if someone would ever call you out for being in the wrong place, they

would be in the wrong, whereas if you grew up with no money you're always sort of expecting that exactly.

Rhys 1:19:01

I shouldn't be here. It's an imposters moment.

Kiri 1:19:04

Absolutely. Final question. What would you wear to be buried in?

Rhys 1:19:11

Oh, that's good. A metaphor I was like, after all I've talked about suits and stuff I was just like nude. Burn me with my suits and no one can have them. Probably just like, I think like a nice plain black, like nice suit. So boring. But just like it kind of with some nice, some nice little accessories. But then I don't know if I'd be, I guess I'd have open casket. I mean, I guess it depends on how I died. Even if I was like, even if I burnt in a house. Put me in that suit. open casket, put me in that suit people, but then also it's like, it's an open casket but the head is closed but the feet are open for some reason. Um, people just look at my feet. Yeah, I think just like a, I don't, I'm trying to think of a specific thing. I'm like literally looking at my clothes actually wait, I know.

Kiri 1:20:13

He's gone for a rifle through his wardrobe.

Rhys 1:20:16

I have this like silver sequined. Yeah, I think I've probably worn it at gigs that we've done together.

Kiri 1:20:24

So you describe that to us.

Rhys 1:20:26

It is pretty gay. It is sequins, black, black sequins and silver sequins in kind of a pinstripe kind of pattern, and it's kind of, I love it because it is so over the top but also pretty classic. Like it's a classic cut of a jacket. It's not like a, I don't know, it's not something you would buy from like a party store or something like it was quite expensive, and to weirdly bring it back around, the portrait that was talking about, I'm wearing that in the portrait, and I think that because it would just be fun. People would come up to the casket and just be like, oh, like it's kind of, its a disco ball kind of and it fits me really well. So yeah, I think that and like I have a Tom Ford. Just plain black tie that I really like that I would wear that. No, no pant. No, no underwear and no trousers.

Kiri 1:21:29

That suit jacket reminds me of when the killers first came along and Brandon Flowers was wearing, was it Dior jackets? A just beautiful kind of statement but still really classic suit. Tuxedo jackets but with something exciting going on, and it reminds me of that.

Rhys 1:21:47

Wynn from Arcade Fire is good for them as well, just these really bonk, like they, they're, Arcade Fire are a band that wear really crazy stuff on stage. But they're actually when you break it down a quiet, pretty normal clothes. They're just they look like you know, kind of like a, I never know if it's basiket or baskway. You know, the like, the artists that work with Warhol. Like do you know who I mean?

Kiri 1:22:10

I don't know, either.

Rhys 1:22:12

But they Yeah, they're these very kind of like graphic, but very classic suits. Yeah. Yeah. Think about that.

Kiri 1:22:21

What a great answer. It's been so lovely talking to you.

Rhys 1:22:26

I feel like this is the most we've ever talked, like we've been together quite a bit, and we'll be backstage a lot. But like, yeah, it's always, it's always nice to actually like hanging out properly.

Kiri 1:22:38

Because also when we're backstage, there's usually a middle aged comedian, holding court, and you and I would just giving each other right side eyes so there's not actually a chance to have a proper conversation. It's been lovely to chat.

Rhys 1:22:57

Yeah, I've loved this, and it's kind of, it was exactly what I like doing, like talking about that type of stuff. So yeah. I like learnt things.

Kiri 1:23:07

Its therapy, that's what it is. It's therapy through clothes. Rhys Nicholson. I'm so glad it wasn't just my brothers, who were given weird shirts from antique shops, and I ? Like, why did we get given a shirt? I'm glad its a universal observation and not just my weird family which so much and one of their experiences of it being. What an absolute gem. Like I said, it's true that we've had loads of chat together. But that's the great thing about this podcast is I can basically Oh, God, just be really weird, and it's, for me, it's a way of boring into the soul of people that I have admired from afar for ages. Not creepy at all. If you want to be as creepy as me, why don't you head over to our Instagram, and you can perv on some of the outfits that Rhys chatted through in the podcast. Basically, every week we release an episode, and we whack up there the outfits of the people we chat to. So you can scroll back through and find the incredible killer looks that other people have spoken about as well. It's really nice fun place to be. So you can follow us at whoareyouwearingpod on Insta. Or if you want to have a chat to us, you can email us, you can write to us. We have had a lush email from Emma this week who says Dear Kiri, I love this podcast. Great start Emma. Every time I listen, I come away with something, this can vary from feeling happy in my body, humbled by your guest experiences, boosted by the humour or the need to buy something as sequins immediately. Yes, Emma. This podcast has introduced me to

vintage websites prompting me to reconnect with how I thought about clothes in my 20s and get back into charity shops. Amen sister, my nine year old daughter and I have just started to pop into our local charity shops every week looking for treasure. I love this so much. Just today she found a cute purse bought it for quid, and when she got home she found 50 P in it. Yes. Just amazing and so fun it turned shopping into making memories. Oh my gosh, Emma, what an, I had never even thought about that. It really, really does because I can you know, nearly every single item from a charity shop I can remember where I got it and how much I paid for it. Oh, that's so true. Whereas I cannot think that about high street shops, which don't have that connection with it. What a great point. Anyway, over lockdown I started walking a lot, walking and podcasts nurtured my mental health and your podcasts have been the main player. That's so lovely. I started with guilty feminist, heard the all killer crossover, binged on your back catalogue, and now I'm all over WAYW as I'm calling it. WAYW, WAYW I'm sticking with it. Just listened to the Michelle de Swarte episode. I love being introduced to all your incredible warm and generous guests. Do you know what? There's not been a dud has there? I'm sure I've got one in the post. But I just put it on my close friends story. No, everyone's been great so far. I love being introduced to all your incredible warm and generous guests. Each one sharing their joy, pain and dodgy outfits. Thank you so much. Can't wait for Glasgow on Monday, Emma. Oh, Emma, thanks for coming along to the show. Oh, it was a belter always loved Glasgow, and then she's put a little asterix here and says also Rachel, Rachel Fairburn, who I host, the All Killer, No Filler podcast with, an upcoming guest on this series. Rachel is a legend. She reminded me how cathartic it is to swear very loudly, and to basically give very few fucks about the things that you can't change. She says, I'm going on a bit now. I honestly believe that listening to your podcasts are good for mental health. My hubby is a shrink, and I keep trying to get him to do a study. Well, I bet he's absolutely thrilled about that one. What a lovely message. That is, the whole thing about making memories. Oh my God, I don't know why, but it's just really speaking to a part of my soul. So thank you for pointing that out to me. If you've got something to say, you can pop us an email, we love reading them. You can email us on whoareyouwearingpod@gmail.com. Now then, every week I choose to bang on about small business that I think is brill, and I was thinking about, because I was trying to write it to the guests and I was thinking about Rhys and I was like well, I've done suits before and I've done tailoring before and I was like, I think I know what I want to talk about because I was aghast or not aghast but certainly shocked when Rhys said he doesn't actually need glasses because I'd always, when I first met Rhys he had glasses, it was part of the look, that sort of sharp 60s look. So I was like okay, let's think about his imposter glasses. That's what I'm gonna call them from now on. I still get it though because it's another accessory isn't it? I mean, I love wearing face masks because to me I'm like bonus accessory. But I get why he's got his glasses on. I went through a fake glasses stage of course. I was indie sleese. But why leave gorgeous glasses to people who need them to see better. So please let me introduce to you a milliner who makes a stunning line in eyewear. I'm so excited, if you don't know about this person I'm so, you're just going to be absolutely blown away. Please get to know Pearl and Swine. So Pearl and Swine, is the brainchild of Bink. So she works in a studio that is basically the downstairs of her house. So she works from there and makes everything herself in West Yorkshire and she is self taught which is, well it is wild when you see how beautiful her pieces are. Oh my gosh. She makes everything like I say by hand and toward it and it really shows, so I found her by her incredible sunglasses, which you can have prescription lenses put into. If you contact Bink in advance, she'll sort it out for you, and I've got my heart set on some of the Medusa glasses for this summer which have snakes coming out of them but there's a filigree player which she makes all the filigree pieces herself. So you can do them in

any colour, there's ones with huge tentacles coming out of them. They are just extra in every kind of way. They're real sort of showstoppers and just so much fun as well like sunglasses I think I love sunglasses. I love oversized sunglasses but like the root of those oversized sunglasses on our way, if I'm not talking about like Jackie O, Victoria Beckham stuff it's all quite stern and boring. Like you cannot say that about Pearl and Swine like it's all so feel good and daft and camp and I absolutely love it. I genuinely, I've got to decide between the Medusa glasses for the summer or the filigree ones but I love them both. Oh, I also massively fall over her head pieces, and how she talks about them, listen to this from her website, its beautiful. For me. Millenary is like reading the best book you've ever read, and there's a real pleasure in not knowing the end of the story until you get there. I love just flowing with my materials, my hats just seem to make themselves as if by magic. I try not to get in the way or overthink where the hat is going. It becomes what it wants to be. I'm lying down to record this, I'm under a duvet in a premier inn in Barry, if you must know. I would have collapsed if I wasn't already lying down. That's such a beautiful thing, and such a one of the best and clearest expressions of creativity I've heard. I know I'm being really lofty here. But just so much about what she does and how she talks about it really sort of resonates with me. You know what, I slag off social media on the, on the internet. But it's helped me find all these talented passionate makers, and they're all so creative, and the way they talk about their art form is how I feel about comedy. I know that so over the top, but that whole thing about like when I'm making a show, it just starts making itself and you're just like, oh, this is exciting. Where's this gonna go? I'm just gonna be a part of it, and try not get in the way of it. So yeah, I'm so glad that I'm able to just enjoy these people's work. So please, please go and have a nose round Pearl and Swines Instagram page and their website, and then thank me later I guess so Pearl and Swine. I'm going to be back next Monday with stand up comedian and cabaret doyenne, Cat Cowen. See you then. 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.