

## 'DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME?'



### LIAM FRAY THE COURTEENERS

**The first record I bought** was TLC's waterfalls. Big tune in Middleton, that.

**The first gig I went to** Oasis at the Reebok Stadium. I was 15. Literally life-changing. Cigarettes and Alcohol felt like the national anthem.

**The first songs that inspired me** were Get Back by The Beatles, Superstition by Stevie Wonder and Days by The Kinks. New York by Stephen Fretwell, Jealous Guy by John Lennon, Hand In Glove by The Smiths and Anything by Joe Lean And The Jing Jang Jong were also big influences.

**The first song I wrote** was called Cavorting. It's alright, nowt to write home about. Although it sold out the day of release apparently. You can pick one up on eBay for 50 gold coins.

**The first gig I played** was The Roadhouse in Manchester in 2006. I'd done the odd open mics around Manchester but the first Courteeners gig was there. I wish I had been in a fit state to remember it.

**My first musical heroes** were John, Paul, George & Ringo. And Seal.

The Courteeners' new album **Concrete Love** is out now. For gig dates and more go to [thecourteeners.com](http://thecourteeners.com).



INTERVIEW

WORDS Laura Raphael

## RIGHT HERE... AND NOW WHAT?

**Fatboy Slim says the only career ambitions he has left are getting a picture with Madonna, streaking a football match and getting a decent obituary when he peps it.**

**The weirdest thing to happen to me while DJ'ing was Kevin Spacey coming up to me heavily disguised at Glastonbury.**

We had a chat in the middle of a set and nobody else realised it was him apart from me. I can't remember what we chatted about. It was Glastonbury, after all, so everything was a blur. It was one of those Keyser Söze moments that no-one else will know if it really happened.

**DJ'ing the House of Commons was like playing at a wedding where no-one was drunk.**

It was quite hard to get an atmosphere but I did manage to warm the MPs up by the end of it.

**I remember the first time I heard one of my tunes on the John Peel show.**

It felt like the pinnacle of everything I ever wanted to do. Over the years all these things ascend, from hearing your music being played on the jukebox at the Queen Vic to ending up playing at the Olympic ceremony (*he played the London 2012 event*.) Every time you think you have reached a pinnacle, you find another one.

**My only regret in life is not having my photo taken with Madonna.**

I was hanging out with her in the old days. We met the first time she came to England and shared a dressing room. It was the time she had the string vest — you know, classic Madonna — but I never had my photo taken with her.

**The smiley symbol is my mantra.** It sums up love, happiness and slight douchiness all in one.

**In my house there are no taboos.** I try not to have that kind of nanny-state attitude to parenting. The thing is, having me and Zoë (*wife Zoë Ball*) as parents you are going to learn a lot about life anyway.

**If I wasn't famous the first thing I would do is streak.**

Because that's one of the things famous people can't do without causing a fuss.

**I once had a fanzine called Peroxide.**

Back then, the major music press didn't cover certain kinds of music. It was about being a music fan and wanting to talk to my heroes more than anything.

**Writing the National Theatre musical Here Lies Love was out of my comfort zone.**

I was lured into it by David Byrne, who is one of my all-time musical heroes. To be honest, it was his dreamchild and I just kind of helped out.

**I have been accused of being Bruce Willis more than once.**

But if I were to die tomorrow I would be happy to just get an obituary. When you are young and you think, 'What do I want to do with my life?' all I thought was, 'I want to be remembered'. And I thought, 'I'll have achieved something as a human being if I am remembered'.