

JOCK ROCK

Davis Mallory is a not-very-ugly-at-all former MTV *Real World* star, carving out a music career. He's been compared to George Michael and Prince and hangs with celebrity chums like Britney, Laverne Cox and Lindsay Lohan!

By Marc Andrews

DNA: We love having gay pop stars who embrace their flamboyant side.

Davis Mallory: When I was a college jock I knew I was gay and attracted to manly men, but I credit Prince as a major inspiration regarding my music evolution. He identified as straight yet had no issue embracing femininity and flamboyance. I also credit *RuPaul's Drag Race* as a recent inspiration, and my time in an LGBT acting school in NYC called Act Out. My fellow classmates included Laverne Cox (*Orange Is The New Black*), Trace Lysette (*Transparent*) and Johnny Sibilly (*Pose*). That school helped me become comfortable with feminine and masculine acting roles. My time living in NYC also made me comfortable wearing make-up and being flamboyant.

In your latest video, *Sun And Moon*, you show two different faces: one made-up and one a sexy hunk. What was the intention?

The intention was to show a more made-up look - to show myself in a rock star role, as a character who is the performer on stage. The other character, the more boyish one, is my true self, my everyday persona. In my love life I feel I have those two sides: the performer side who loves attention and is confident, and then the boyish side who, when he likes a guy, is shy and coy.

How would you describe your music?

My sound, as a whole, is electropop and dance with elements of country, rock'n'roll and R'n'B. I was raised in Atlanta, Georgia - the home of hip-hop and right in the heart of the South where country music reigns supreme.

You are often compared to George Michael; is that an accurate assessment of your talent?

I get comparisons to George Michael's voice nearly every week when people hear me sing. Sometimes I'm told I remind people of Justin Timberlake. Both Prince and Michael Jackson have been great inspirations to me, and Elvis Presley. I like to think I could follow in Elvis' footsteps being that I'm from

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the South and making pop/rock'n'roll music.

Who's your diva?

Mariah Carey's *Daydream* album was the first CD I ever purchased and I was a huge fan throughout my youth.

Are you part of this great new era of openly gay pop stars?

[Laughs.] I would say I am! Openly gay pop stars inspired and encouraged me to pursue the career I have always wanted. Out artists like Jake Shears of Scissor Sisters, Antony Hegarty (now Anohni) of Hercules And Love Affair and Justin Tranter were my early influences when I began down this road of being an openly gay artist. The coming out of Ricky Martin and Lance Bass certainly helped. The second wave came with Adam Lambert and Sam Smith and Troye Sivan, who each opened many doors for me and other artists like me. Of course, that road was set long before all of those guys by icons like REM's Michael Stipe, Elton John, The B-52's and Freddie Mercury.

How was your coming out?

I only came out to my mother at first due to her religious beliefs. I was made to feel that being gay was both a choice and a sin. I came out in my senior year of college and auditioned to be on MTV's *The Real World* that same year. Two weeks after graduating college I went on to star on *The Real World: Denver* and by doing so came out to the entire world.

When did you come out as wanting to be a pop star?

It was actually seeing artists like Adam Lambert, Sam Smith and Troye Sivan do so well that convinced me that my being gay would not limit my potential in music and the time was right to be a recording artist.

You've released a few tracks already. Talk us through your career so far.

At the end of 2017, I bought a one-way ticket to Amsterdam, wound up staying in Europe for two months, and wrote over 25 new songs with DJ producers. My first song to come from that, *Dance With Me*, is by French DJ Loic Penillo. My second is with Indian DJ Cosmos, called *Let Me Go In Peace*. I wrote *Sun And Moon* in Sweden. It's about the end of my last relationship. My boyfriend and I dated for three years and I was inspired by a new crush I had on a producer who I worked with in Europe.

Do you hang out with many celebrities?

When I lived in NYC five years ago I had a very different circle of friends including Laverne Cox, Johnny Sibilly, Lindsay Lohan, Chrissy Teigan, Amanda Lepore, Cazwell, Natalia Kills (now Teddy Sinclair) and others in the fashion and acting world. Right after my time on *The Real World* I hung out with Aubrey O'Day, Britney Spears, Nicole Scherzinger and Lauren Conrad (*The Hills*) in LA nightlife.

What do you do when you're not making music?

During my free time, I go out to gay bars with



DAVIS ON DATING APPS

"I've taken a long break from dating apps. I met my last serious boyfriend on Grindr, but that didn't go well. I've met many people from apps like Grindr, Tinder or Chappy, that I have become friends with, so I'm not opposed to them from a networking angle, especially when exploring new cities. When it comes to love, I've found that meaningful experiences in my dating life have come from spontaneous real-life encounters, such as meeting people via friends or at events, and not from dating apps."



friends; I don't drink alcohol but enjoy dancing and being social. I also enjoy working out and running in Nashville's many green parks.

What's one thing that might surprise people about you?

Since I grew up in a very strong Christian home I still consider myself a strong Christian. I also have three small tattoos most people don't notice.

Are you dating?

I had a three-year relationship between 2014 to 2017 that ended badly. As a result I've been hesitant to date again. I've dated since him but been pickier this time around. I want my next relationship to work, so I'm taking things slowly and I really want to stay focused on myself right now.

What kind of guys are you interested in?

I like guys who are in great shape and have an athletic build. Just as much as I love a guy who is bigger than me, I also go for guys who are smaller than me. My last ex was shorter than me, but my ex before him was this tall, handsome, black model, so I don't have an exact type. Aside from physical looks, I like guys who are ambitious, creative and work towards their goals in life.

How romantic are you?

When I'm in love with someone I'm romantic. I love spending quality time together, having date nights, celebrating anniversaries, doing nice gestures for each other. I think my love language is touch and words are my affirmation. I haven't been in a romantic relationship for a while, so I can't remember very well just how romantic I am, sad to say.

At the beach, speedos, boardshorts or nude?

I wear boardshorts. I am American, after all.

[Laughs.] If I'm in Europe or Australia, I am game to wear a speedo, or even go nude. I just haven't done that yet.

MORE: Find Davis on Instagram, Spotify, Soundcloud, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. For more go to www.davismallory.bandcamp.com. He has three new singles concurrently in release, *Downtown*, *Lost* and *Ain't Afraid*.