

AMY MACDONALD

# For the Record

Con una ballata orecchiabile, “This is the Life”, una voce impegnata e un look da ragazzina è arrivata ai vertici delle classifiche europee. Ma Amy McDonald non è una che si prende troppo sul serio. E alla celebrità da pop star preferisce l’anonimato.

By Marcel Anders © Planet Syndication



LANGUAGE LEVEL

**C1 (advanced)**  
TRACK 6

Speaker: Justin Ratcliffe  
Standard British accent

Above and opposite page: pop star Amy MacDonald, who was born in Bishopbriggs, Scotland on August 25th, 1987.



## Glossary

- 1 **taken the music world by storm** - ha travolto il mondo della musica.
- 2 **a remarkable achievement** - un risultato notevole.
- 3 **sophomore album** - il secondo album (sophomore significa secondo anno in gergo accademico).
- 4 **revenue** - introiti.
- 5 **to put the record straight** - rettificare l'affermazione.
- 6 **you're in a huge amount of debt to your record label** - sei in un mare di debiti con la tua casa discografica.
- 7 **stacked right up** - si è accumulato di parecchio.

A few months ago Speak Up featured an interview with the pop star Paolo Nutini. Nutini was born in Scotland in 1987 and so was Amy MacDonald, who has similarly taken the music world by storm<sup>1</sup>.

Both artists grew up near Glasgow: Nutini is from Paisley, while MacDonald is from Bishopbriggs. The difference is that Nutini is a Catholic of Italian origin and so his favourite football team is Celtic. MacDonald, on the other hand, is a Protestant and supports Rangers, while her English boyfriend, Steve Lovell, used to play for a relatively minor Glasgow team, Partick Thistle.

### MONEY AND MUSIC...

In terms of music, Amy MacDonald made her recording debut in 2007 with the album *This Is the Life*, which contained the hit single of the same name. The album sold three million copies and she has sold an estimated two million singles. This is a remarkable achievement<sup>2</sup> at a time when the music industry is clearly in crisis. And her sophomore album<sup>3</sup>, *A Curious Thing*, came out in March.

And yet, in spite of her commercial suc-

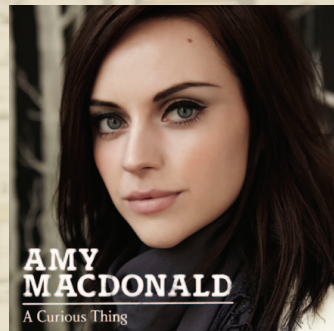
cess, Amy MacDonald is reported as saying that she “hasn’t seen a penny” of the revenue<sup>4</sup> from her sales. We asked her to put the record straight<sup>5</sup>:

### Amy MacDonald

(Scottish accent):

People reported that completely differently from what I said. It was actually a conversation on Twitter that I was having with fans, just people that were asking questions. And I was just answering them. And they were asking about album sales, and I never said that I’d never made a penny. What I said (was) that I hadn’t made any money from selling the actual CD. And that’s very normal, because the massive amount of cost that it requires to release an album. So, before you’ve even put it in the shops, you’re in a huge amount of debt to your record label<sup>6</sup>, because they so kindly give you the money, so that you can live for the next year! So you’re in that debt, you’re in the debt of every penny that they spent on advertising, promotion, which obviously stacked right up<sup>7</sup>. So ▽





Amy MacDonald was interviewed by Marcel Anders. Here are some more questions and answers:

**Q:** So what was it like when you met U2?

**A:** *I was given a card that said: "To Amy: Come and say hello to your fan club!" And it was signed "All of U2." And I thought: "Wow!" So then we got invited to their dressing room and we were in there for about an hour or so. Bono said: "Do you want a drink?" And he was pouring me a drink, and I was just laughing in my head thinking: "Bono's pouring me a drink!" It was just really funny.*

**Q:** Are you still star-struck in situations like that?

**A:** *I certainly was when I met U2. I felt like a bit of an imposter!*

**Q:** And what about the paparazzi problem?

**A:** *I've heard that some artists actually rent crowds to turn up and scream their name!*

**Q:** And is it true that you don't like Lady Gaga?

**A:** *No, I may have a problem with her attitude towards paparazzi, but, in terms of her music, I think she's great. Her show is brilliant and she's changed the whole musical landscape.*



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Amy MacDonald says that, in spite of her popularity, she doesn't have a problem with paparazzi. "I can go where I like, people never recognise me, which is really nice. I can be completely anonymous." She believes that other pop stars, like Amy Winehouse and Lady Gaga, actually want to be recognised.



## Glossary

- 8 **I think I'm like dead even now... anything** - ora credo di essere in pari, non gli devo più niente.
- 9 **and the whole fame thing I could take it or leave it** - tutta questa storia della celebrità per me fa lo stesso.
- 10 **the big beehive** - la capigliatura cotonata (riferimento al look di Amy Winehouse).
- 11 **I don't flaunt myself in magazines** - non mi dò tante arie sulle riviste.
- 12 **actually court it** - in realtà se li vanno a cercare (i paparazzi).
- 13 **I was on a tiny flight** - ero su un breve volo.
- 14 **she changed her wig... flight** - si è cambiata la parrucca tre volte in un'ora di volo.
- 15 **a pair of scruffy trousers and a jumper** - un paio di pantaloni trasandati e un maglione.
- 16 **was up to here** - fino a qui.
- 17 **a bra and a pair of leather trousers** - un reggiseno e un paio di pantaloni di cuoio.
- 18 **don't moan about people following you** - poi non ti lamentare se la gente ti segue.

you have to sell, I think, about three million before you start earning on the album sales. So I think I'm like dead even now, like I don't owe them anything<sup>8</sup>, but obviously things are slowing down now, so there's not really any album sales happening. So that's what that meant: I never meant that I was poor, or anything like that!

## CELEBRITY

And how she is handling her celebrity?

### Amy MacDonald:

To be honest, I don't see myself as famous. And the whole fame thing I could take it or leave it<sup>9</sup>. I've not really any interest. I just like music, and I like being a musician, and, for me, I think that it's good that I've managed to have this very successful album, but I can still be completely anonymous because I don't have the big beehive<sup>10</sup>, or I don't flaunt myself in magazines<sup>11</sup>, so people don't really know what you look like. I think that's a good way to be. I think they can have the voice and see the CD, but they don't really know what you look like in a real-life scenario. So it's good for me!

### AS FOR LADY GAGA...

And she doesn't seem to have problems with paparazzi:

### Amy MacDonald:

But I think that a lot of people actually court it<sup>12</sup>. The one example that I know of was I was on a tiny flight<sup>13</sup> with Lady Gaga, towards the north of Sweden. So there was one flight a day to this place from Stockholm, and it was a festival. So everyone that was playing was on the same flight. So she was on the flight, and it was like she changed her wig three times in an hour flight<sup>14</sup>, right? And it's like: "Why else are you doing that?" Like and this is the thing, like if she was wearing what I was wearing, i.e. a hat and a pair of scruffy trousers and a jumper<sup>15</sup>, nobody would have known who she was! But because she came out with three different wigs, one which was up to here<sup>16</sup>, basically a bra and a pair of leather trousers<sup>17</sup> and like boots that are that high, people know who she is instantly. And it's just like: "Well, don't moan about people following you<sup>18</sup>, because if you wore what I was wearing, nobody would even recognise you!"