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Kylie Incarnations

26 May 2011

Before Kylie was known as Kylie, she was "that girl from *Neighbours*". Hard to believe, yes, because now you just have to say the name "Kylie" and everyone knows who you're talking about.

But while that iconic name has remained a constant in our pop cultural psyche since she left Ramsay Street all those years ago, the persona definitely hasn't, with the Kylie name finding itself attached to image overhauls and revamps that are as frequent and swift as a backstage costume change or the bat of a false eyelash.

In honour of Kylie's birthday on 28 May, we take a look at some of the more memorable incarnations to have been associated with the good Kylie name over the years.



That Girl From *Neighbours*

Also known as Charlene – or 'Chazza', not to be confused with Sharon 'Shazza' Strezlecki from *Kath and Kim* – the poodle-permed mechanic, or the girl who married that mulleted hunk of a man Jason Donovan in 1987's TV wedding of the year. As the show's title suggests, she was the quintessential girl next door. Kylie's come a long way, baby.



I Should Be So Lucky Kylie

The beginning of her pop career saw her in a bubble bath blowing foam at the camera and dancing around her bedroom; a girlie girl on the verge of both womanhood and superstardom. And who could forget that album cover where she wore that enormous hat/fascinator/giant record disc on her head?

Retro Kylie

"I wanna funk, I wanna funk, I wanna f-f-f-f-u-n-k". The otherwise harmless disco number 'Step Back in Time' hinted at the cheeky, saucy Kylie that was beginning to emerge and was her very first foray into the arena of disco-pop. The feathery green vest, oversized sunglasses, feather boa and black hot pants were just a taster for the gold hot pants and retro-inspired raunch that was to come but, for then, the psychedelic cat suit and blatant campy-kitsch references to life in the 1970s and remembering the "old days" were disco-chic enough for her.



Rebel Kylie

Michael Hutchence was quoted as saying that his favourite hobby was "corrupting Kylie". The image overhaul was a dramatic one – there was the relationship with Hutchence, the fishnet tights, the dark vampy eye makeup, the straightened hair and even soft-core girl-on-girl action in the video for 'What Do I Have to Do? The girl next door had moved on.



Indie Kylie

If you're considering a more off-beat artistic persona, what better way to veer off that beaten track than to collaborate with Nick Cave and release a love song that ends in murder? Aside from 'Where the Wild Roses Grow', Kylie took a more mainstream, user-friendly bohemian edge, messing up her hair and wearing quirky clothes for the slightly left-of-centre tracks 'Confide in Me' and 'Did It Again'.

Disco Kylie

No one will forget those gold hot pants. Her behind is burned into the memory of everyone not living under a rock in 2000. Her album, *Light Years*, is considered by some to be one of the best comebacks in pop history and this was all down to pretty much one thing: yes, reinvention. Kylie's new and improved disco diva persona and her *On a Night Like This* tour, which featured burlesque, Broadway, Big Band and all-over camp, cemented her status as a gay icon. The 'impossible princess' had become a performance queen.



Green Fairy Kylie

Having Kylie flutter onto the big screen as Absinthe, the Green Fairy, in *Moulin Rouge* was the cherry on top (or the worm in the absinthe) of Baz Luhrmann's homage to 20th century pop culture. Oh so camp, colourful and musical, the part was made for her.

Electro Pop Kylie

Only Kylie could get away with wearing a lick of white fabric attached to a hood as she thrust and snarled her way to the number one spot in over 20 countries with 'Can't Get You Out of My Head'. The new album, *Fever*, mashed up the disco sound of her earlier music with electropop to create an über pop icon – her music and image became more surreal, magnificent and untouchable.



Parisien Kylie

The *Body Language* album was accompanied by a sexpot image inspired by 1960s icon Brigitte Bardot. Kylie herself described Bardot as "one of the greatest pinups". I wonder if her relationship with French actor [Olivier Martinez](#) was also an influence, non? Or should I say, "Je ne sais pas pourquoi?"

Showgirl Kylie

Even though the Showgirl – Greatest Hits tour was all about glamour, artifice, costume and makeup, it is nonetheless one of the most true Kylie identities – because that's exactly what she is, a showgirl at heart.

Goddess Kylie

"I'm fierce and I'm feeling mighty, I'm a golden girl, I'm an Aphrodite". These lyrics, from the title track of the latest album *Aphrodite*, pretty much say it all.



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Click to read Kylie talk about her album *Aphrodite* and the best part of being a gay icon.

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