

EDITOR:
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next

With a songbird's voice and a sailor's mouth,

Lily Allen is known for being a tote bag of contradictions. Her first disc, *Alright, Still*, poked fun at club-land VIPs, idiotic ex-boyfriends and the unattainable beauty of Kate Moss. Her debut's hit song, "Smile"—which seems harmless enough until the wicked chorus kicks in: "When I see you cry/Yeah it makes me smile"—combined a highly unlikely, yet completely likable, mix of pop, ska and soul.

Her new album, *It's Not Me, It's You*, continues on the same unpredictable path, featuring Allen's buttery-soft vocals singing lyrics that place her bull's-eye on stodgy media types and right-wing politicians. In fact, the disc's standout track—the controversially titled "Fuck You"—has Allen serenading the F-word in five octaves to her own personal blacklist.

"It was meant to be a soundtrack to the U.S. election, but the album didn't come out soon enough," Allen says via cellphone from London. "'Fuck You' sounds like it's dedicated to George Bush, but it came to be because I wanted to write about the BNP [British National Party], a political party that preaches hatred against gays and immigrants. The song is still quite relevant to what is happening in the United States, though."

Aside from the political cussing and fussing, Allen's thoughts on the plight of the 21st-century celeb are also worked out via her first single, "The Fear." The song's lyrics—which are meant to be completely ironic—could very well be inspired by Paris Hilton's heaps of press, both good and bad. The latter is something Allen feels she's been battling for the past two years—so much so, she has even blasted specific music journalists on her MySpace page, declaring they write "like they are still living in the 1950s."

Allen explains: "They assume a woman can't possibly control her own life or career in music. It irritates me. As if there must be a man funding her or setting her up. You never hear people say James Morrison or Paolo Nutini have record-company executives with puppet strings telling them what to do. Amy [Winehouse], Adele, Duffy and myself have succeeded *because* of our personal struggles. Anything I say in public can be taken out of context, but my songs are the only thing that can't be sensationalized." —E.I.

Lily Allen
returns to
pop with a
few choice
words

the hit
disturber