

Darren PERCIVAL

FINDS HIS VOICE

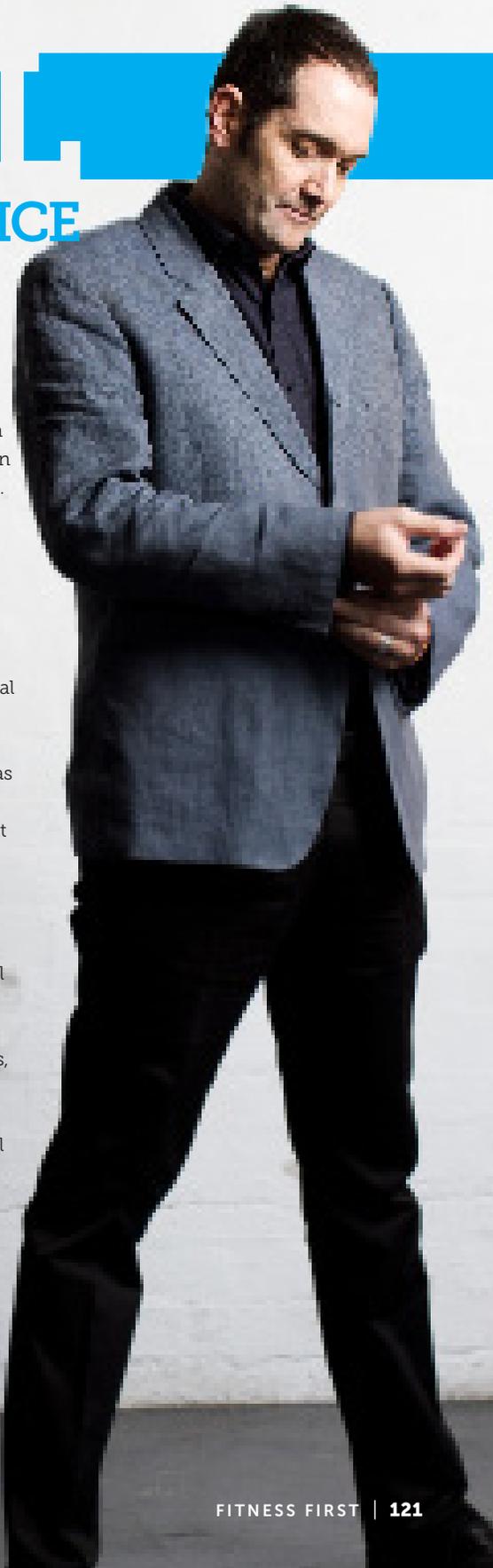
SINGER/SONGWRITER
DARREN PERCIVAL
TELLS US WHAT IT'S
LIKE TO BE ON THE
RIDE OF HIS LIFE, AND
HOW THINGS HAVE
CHANGED AFTER BEING
DISCOVERED ON THE
TELEVISION PROGRAM,
THE VOICE.

DARREN PERCIVAL IS LARGER

than life. I see him standing outside the recording studio in a quiet street in Sydney's inner west before my Navman tells me I have reached my destination. With his skyrocketing career and an explosion of new fans emerging – literally – overnight, it looks as though Darren, too, may have reached his destination.

A professional musician for the past 20 years, it wasn't until Darren's magical performances, which earned him the runner-up place on Channel 9's *The Voice Australia* TV program, that he was catapulted into the lives of Australians.

Over the years, Darren's involvement in the music industry has been varied; from voiceovers to singing on commercials, from back up vocals to encouraging primary school children to sing; he even had a coaching school for many years. 'My life has orbited around anything to do with singing – whether I'm performing, writing songs, or working with other people (both established artists or beginners).' Starting a family was a big wake up call for Darren, and since the birth of his first child three years ago he realised that he needed to 'get off the road and grow up a bit.'





👍 **WHEN I WAS THINKING ABOUT DOING THE SHOW MY WIFE SAID "DON'T MAKE THE DECISION NOT TO DO IT AND SIT HERE AND WATCH IT AND WISH YOU HAD." IT'S EASY TO DO THAT IN LIFE, SIT THERE AND GO "WHY DIDN'T I DO THAT?"**

From this awakening he created a business that supports companies by inspiring employees and teaching them to use their voice in business.

For the (probably two) people in the country who missed out on watching the global phenomenon (as Darren calls it), here is a quick rundown about the TV program that honours singers. Darren says that it's a show like no other, which is modelled on integrity and kindness.

'The coaches are inspiring and very successful artists, but they are facing away from you so that when you walk out on stage, you don't get to meet them. You only get to meet them if they decide if your voice is something that they might like to work with. If they do, then they hit a button and they spin their chair around to look at you. If more than one of them spins around, the power goes back to the artist, who gets to choose which coach to work with.'

DARREN'S WORDS OF WISDOM

- » Be gentle with yourself; be mindful of your internal judge.
- » Don't rush any process associated with your art.
- » Make it unique to you.
- » Stay open to your talent.
- » Don't be afraid of being great.

Having the opportunity to be coached by Keith Urban with 11 other contestants, Darren said he was absolutely thrilled as it had been an ambition of his since he heard Keith's single, Tonight I Want to Cry, at a pub in Dorrigo in country NSW, where his family are from. 'Working with Keith was so inspiring, and I feel very very grateful that I had that opportunity.' And how did it feel to sing a duet with Keith? 'That was an amazing moment. To get to do that song with him, particularly that song, it was like a dream, like actually being in a dream.'

There are lessons to be learned from every experience and The Voice gave Darren the opportunity to heed some useful tips from his coach Keith. 'To get out of my own way... to let the gift I have flow through me... to stop thinking and, instead, feel what I am doing... these were the greatest pieces of advice', he says.

Getting noticed in the street and receiving a 'hi' or a 'congratulations' from complete strangers is par for the course when you've been on the journey Darren has. He manages to keep his feet on the ground with help from his wife, who likes to make jokes about him putting the garbage out! 'It's actually brought a lot of peace to our home and our life. We've all landed really gently into it and I'm proud of that for us. I have an amazing support platform; all my friends and family are so supportive,

and it's real,' Darren says.

What stands out most about Darren is his genuine gratitude for where life has taken him. He speaks openly and honestly about his love for his wife and two small children, and the incredible ride he has found himself on. 'I haven't come to terms with the actual reality of it; it's just so overwhelming because if you had the journey that I have had – working in rooms that get smaller and smaller, with audiences that get smaller and smaller – then to know that you can put a show on sale and it's sold out in a few hours... it's all quite...' Darren trails off, unable to find the words to describe the emotions evoked by a dream come true. 'Let's just say, the transition has been quick, so I'm still getting used to it.'

With The Voice competition now behind him, he's busy promoting his new album called Happy Home, which he admits feels surreal. Darren believes 'you can have anything you want in this life, and if you focus on it, then it will come to you.'

So what's next? 'Lots of interviews, writing songs, performing live and touring – just being on the ride and continuing on with what has been offered to me.'

Interviewed and written by
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