

'I THINK WOMEN TODAY NEED TO LEARN HOW TO BE LADIES AGAIN. GOING OUT WITHOUT ANY KNICKERS ON JUST ISN'T COOL!'

KELLY ROWLAND

OPENS UP EXCLUSIVELY TO *OK! MIDDLE EAST* DURING A BOAT RIDE TO THE WORLD ISLANDS IN DUBAI



Above and right: Kelly was polite and friendly during our boat trip to The World, Dubai.

So here we are aboard a luxury boat heading to The World with Kelly Rowland. Posing for the *OK!* snapper, in her gold Tom Ford sunnies, the 27-year-old Grammy award-winning artist exudes a positive, non-diva-ish aura. "I'm in the middle of recording my new album, so it's nice to come out here for a quick break," says Kelly who lives in Miami. "I've been to Dubai a few times and I love it here." Throughout the trip, Kelly who's accompanied by her manager and stylist, rarely checks her Blackberry, instead she's keen to learn more about the local culture. *OK! Middle East* finds out more about the gorgeous singer's struggle to find Mr Right, going under the knife and making music...

Hi Kelly, nice to have you back in Dubai again - for the third time. What are you doing here this time?

I'm here to perform at the launch party for an incredible property development called Aquitainia on The World. I first heard about it about two years ago when I was here with Destiny's Child and it sounded so exciting.

It's easy to forget you were part of one of the biggest girl bands on the planet as you're so down-to-earth. How do you stay so grounded?

Well I surround myself with positive people who don't have huge egos! Plus, if I went home to Houston with a bigger head, my family would bring me right back down! My friends keep me grounded.

Who are your closest friends?

Apart from Beyoncé and Michelle, my other best friend is Barbara and we went to school together. Also Serena Williams is a really great friend of mine.

How often are you in touch with Beyoncé and Michelle?

I talk to those ladies just about every other day. If it's not by phone, it's by Blackberry. I'll see Beyoncé next week when I'm back to Miami and Michelle a week after that.

You're also close to Beyoncé's sister, Solange, aren't you?

Yes, she's like a baby sister to me. We were at Paris Fashion Week together. She bought her son, too. after the shows, all watched movies and ate French fries!

What shows did you attend in Paris?

Roberto Cavalli and Dolce and Gabbana and they were both fabulous.

**'There's nothing
wrong with plastic
surgery so long as
you're happy with
who you are on
the inside'**





Above: Kelly doesn't rule out a re-union with Destiny's Child. **Right:** Kelly put on a stunning performance at the Aquitainia launch party in Buddha Bar, Grosvenor House. **Below:** The singer poses on The World Island of Spain.



Who are your favourite designers?

I love Dsquared and I'm really excited about meeting the masterminds behind the label. As well as Cavalli and Dolce, I love Diane Von Furstenberg, Ralph Lauren and Donna Karan. In fact, I went into Donna Karan in London recently and spent way too much money!

You're recording your new album at the moment. Tell us more...

It has a slightly different sound compared to my last one. I've spent so much time outside of the States and in Europe, so I've sucked up the vibe of the places of visited. I've filled it up with great melodies and there's some R&B, but also a few more dance tracks. It'll be out next March/April.

With all your travelling and recording, do you have any time for a boyfriend?

Not really [Laughs] That's probably why I'm still single. It takes time to get to know someone and their true personality.



Kelly Rowland

What do you look for in a potential boyfriend?

Above anything, confidence. I prefer the type of guy who like to have fun, is spontaneous and has a great sense of humour. I love a nice sexy smile. A guy with great teeth is always nice. Age doesn't matter to me.

Do you prefer to date famous guys?

They don't have to be a celebrity. As a matter of fact, I think I would prefer them not to be. I think that's my space! For me, dating guys outside of the music industry works well.

What turns you off in a guy?

Cockiness and arrogance. I don't like it when they are a showboat or when they're as shallow as a baby pool. And I hate a guy who's not secure within himself as a man. You have to love yourself before you can love anyone else.

In 2006, you were engaged to Dallas Cowboys player Roy Williams, why did you two break up?

The timing wasn't right. I was only 24 but it was more than that, it just didn't feel right, you know.

You wrote a track called *Flashback*, on your last album. Was that about Roy?

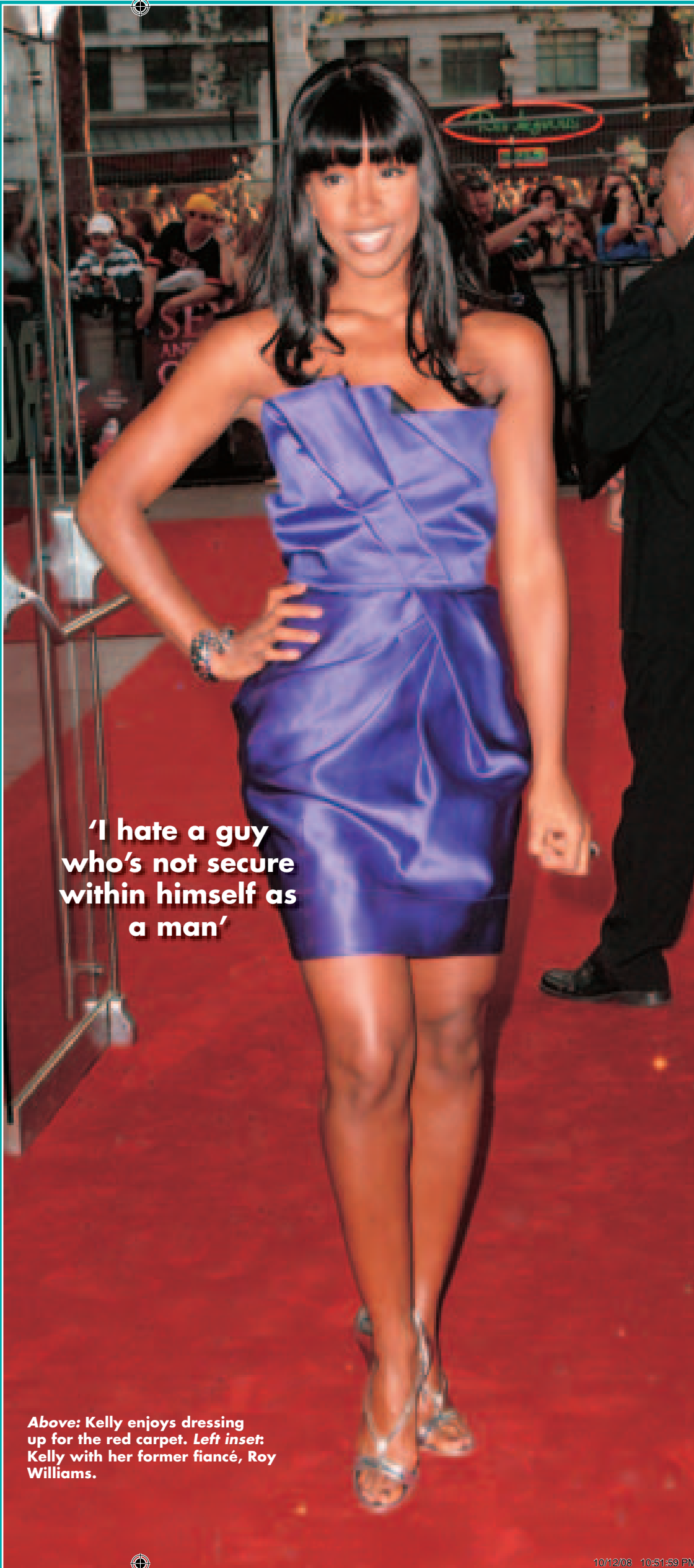
Yes! I think it's cathartic writing about things that happen in your life. It helps deal with the pain.

Are you still friends with your ex-fiancé?

We speak every now and then, not too much though. He's busy and I'm busy. When we see each other we're still very courteous.

Do you generally believe in staying friends with your exes?

No, not really. I'm a weirdo. When I'm done with them, that's it! I think there's really nothing else to be said. I guess sometimes it depends on the nature of the break-up.



'I hate a guy who's not secure within himself as a man'



Above: Kelly enjoys dressing up for the red carpet. Left inset: Kelly with her former fiancé, Roy Williams.

Kelly Rowland

Was it true that you once dated British TV presenter Reggie Yates?

No, not at all. That was a lie! He interviewed me and that was it!

What's the most outrageous story you've heard about yourself?

I hear a lot of stuff. A few months ago, it was reported that myself Usher and Nelly spent US\$200,000 dollars on alcohol in Amika nightclub in London. It was a ridiculous lie. I would never do that. My mamma would kill me if I did anything like that!

Do you want a big family in the future?

I do. I want at least three kids. I used to want five until I took my godchildren away with me and then I realised how hard it is to take care of so many different personalities! We went to Universal Studios together and one of the girls wandered off while another held onto my leg for dear life!

Aside from spending time with your godchildren, what else do you like doing in your free time?

I like to eat and sleep and watch TV! I know that's not very exciting but I'm so busy the rest of the time so I just like to chill.

You look great. What's your secret?

I try to drink lots of water and get enough sleep. And I swear by Natura Bisse's daycream.

Do you have a personal trainer?

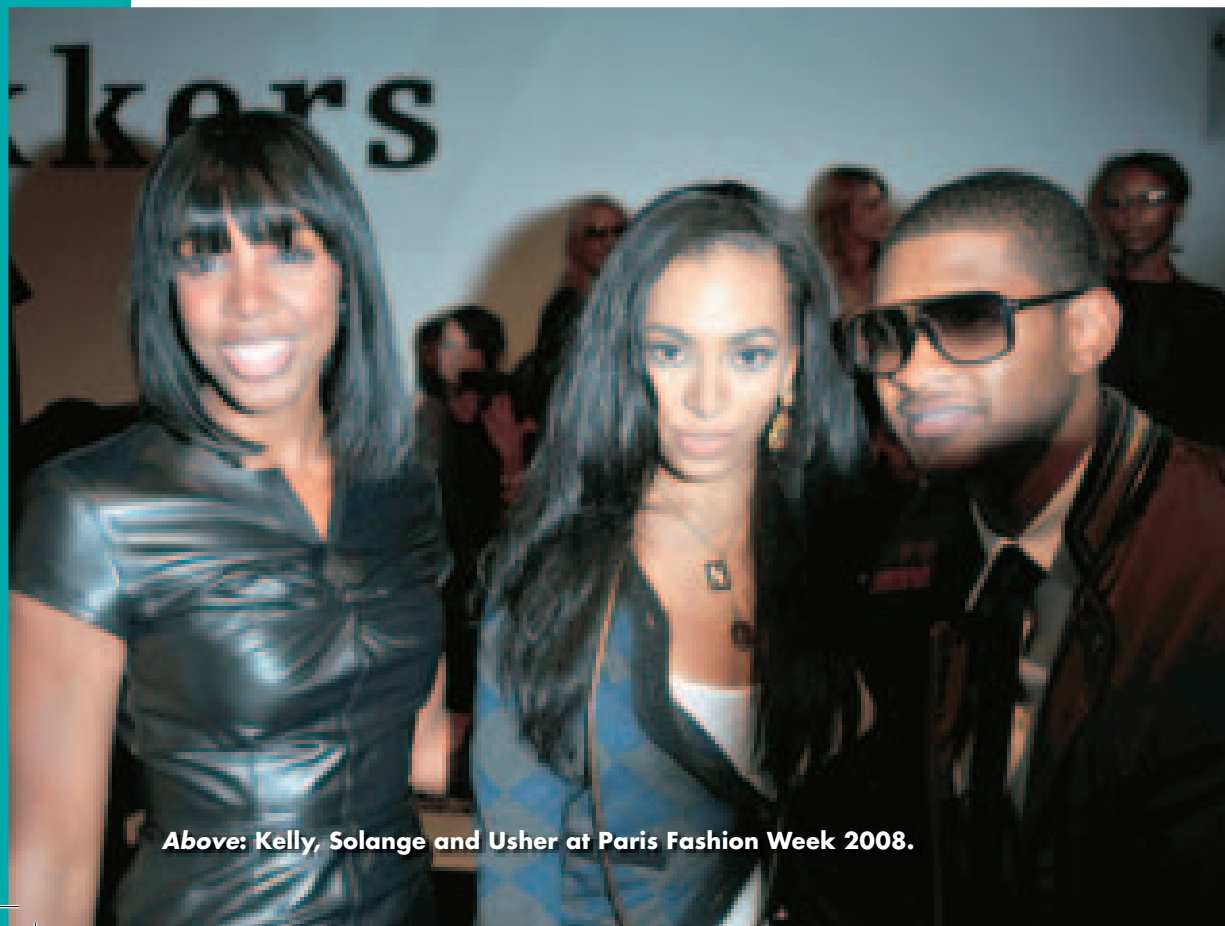
I do in Miami. I really want to get into yoga, my friend Russell Simmons keeps telling me how great it is but so far I keep bailing out of the lessons! I want to get into kickboxing too.

You openly admitted that you've had breast implants earlier this year. Are you pleased with the results?

Yes, I am. It's only a subtle change anyway but now I can now wear all the cute little



'I want to set up a self-esteem charity for young girls'



Above: Kelly, Solange and Usher at Paris Fashion Week 2008.

tops that I couldn't for many years. Now I fill them and it's a good feeling. I was terrified going into the theatre but I was also excited. My best friend Barbara was there to pick me up and take care of me!

What are your future dreams?

I want to set up a charity for young girls to raise their self-esteem. I want to invite inspirational female speakers including lawyers, wives and other professional women to give talks and instill confidence in young girls. I remember my great aunts would take me to etiquette classes when I was a young girl to teach me how to sit properly. I think all of that stuff is really important. I'm not judging or anything, but when you open a magazine, and you see a celebrity going out without any knickers on, that's just not cool. I think women today need to learn how to be ladies again! **OK!**

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WITH THANKS TO NAKHEEL AND SELECT GROUP.
FOR MORE INFO ABOUT THE AQUITAINIA PROJECT CHECK OUT
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