



Talking with...Terence Trent D'Arby

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Jeremy Helligar reports...

Critics have often marveled at Terence Trent D'Arby's genre-jumping. But to D'Arby, who is single and lives in L.A., it's no big deal. "I've always been like that," he says. "I'm a music man. I don't think Aretha Franklin has any more soul than Patsy Cline, or that Patsy Cline has any more than Neil Young. And I don't think Neil Young has any more than [R and B singer] Bill Withers."

How did growing up in Florida, the son of a Pentecostal preacher who disapproved of secular music, shape you? My parents loved me and tried to do their absolute best, but it was stifling in a lot of ways. Anything that wasn't [gospel] like the Five Blind Boys of Alabama or Shirley Caesar was an undiscovered gem. They say preachers' sons are the worst, and I went buck-wild once I was on my own.

You set your moral code by discovery, and that involves living and learning. Was it your rebellious nature that recently led you to give up your trademark dreads for a short blond crop? It was nothing spectacular. I just felt it was time. It's my restless nature. Often our external appearance is symbolic of things that stem from our inner world, and I felt some internal changes.

Such as? Having turned 33 a few weeks ago, I came to realize that what one does and what one is are two different things. So now I'm not in the studio all the time. I'll take a honey day. A friend may be in town, and she wants to hang out. Sometimes there's nothing like sitting around with a margarita and appreciating the value of friendship. ■

