A black and white close-up portrait of a woman's face. Her right hand is raised to her chin, with her fingers resting against her skin. Her eyes are looking slightly to the right of the camera. Her hair is dark and appears to be long. The lighting is soft, highlighting the contours of her face and the texture of her skin and hair.

Cheryl Cole

through my eyes

ABOUT THE BOOK

Cheryl Cole is one of the most photographed women in the world. Here, in her first official book, she's chosen a stunning selection of those images - including informal snaps from her personal collection as well as exclusive shots taken in some of the world's most glamorous locations - in order to allow us a very special glimpse into her life.

From the recording studio in Los Angeles to backstage in Dublin on the opening night of her tour with the Black Eyed Peas, Cheryl shares with us some of her stand-out moments as a solo artist. We also accompany her behind the scenes at The X Factor, into the mysterious world of the fashion shoot, on to the red carpets of the music industry's top awards ceremonies and out to the windswept desert in California for a spectacular shoot, where we see her relaxing during rare moments of anonymity.

Through the pictures that mean the most to her and the personal stories that accompany them, told in her own words, *Through My Eyes* is a revealing and intimate portrait of the world of our favourite superstar.

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*Cheryl
Cole*

through my eyes



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For me, looking at pictures is a bit like listening to music. It reminds you of what you were doing and how you were feeling at certain points in your life. I can look at photos and straight away they will bring back all kinds of memories.

When it came to choosing the pictures for this book, I went for a real mixture. Some are from big occasions in my career, like the Brits and the Cannes Film Festival, and some are my personal photos taken behind the scenes, of me preparing for things or of me just relaxing on a day off. All are times and places that I'd like to share with you.

Sometimes I look at pictures and can't believe it's me. I think we probably all have those moments when photos aren't anything like the way we see ourselves. I seem to change all the time. With photo shoots, so much depends on the lighting, makeup, hair, the photographer, whether it's in a studio or on location and what kind of mood you're in on that day. It all comes through in the pictures. I love the personal photos, the informal ones.

Putting this collection of pictures together was an opportunity to take another look at some of the amazing experiences I've had. Things sometimes happen in a bit of an adrenalin haze so it's nice to enjoy those moments again at my own pace. I wanted a book that was packed with memories. I hope you enjoy it.

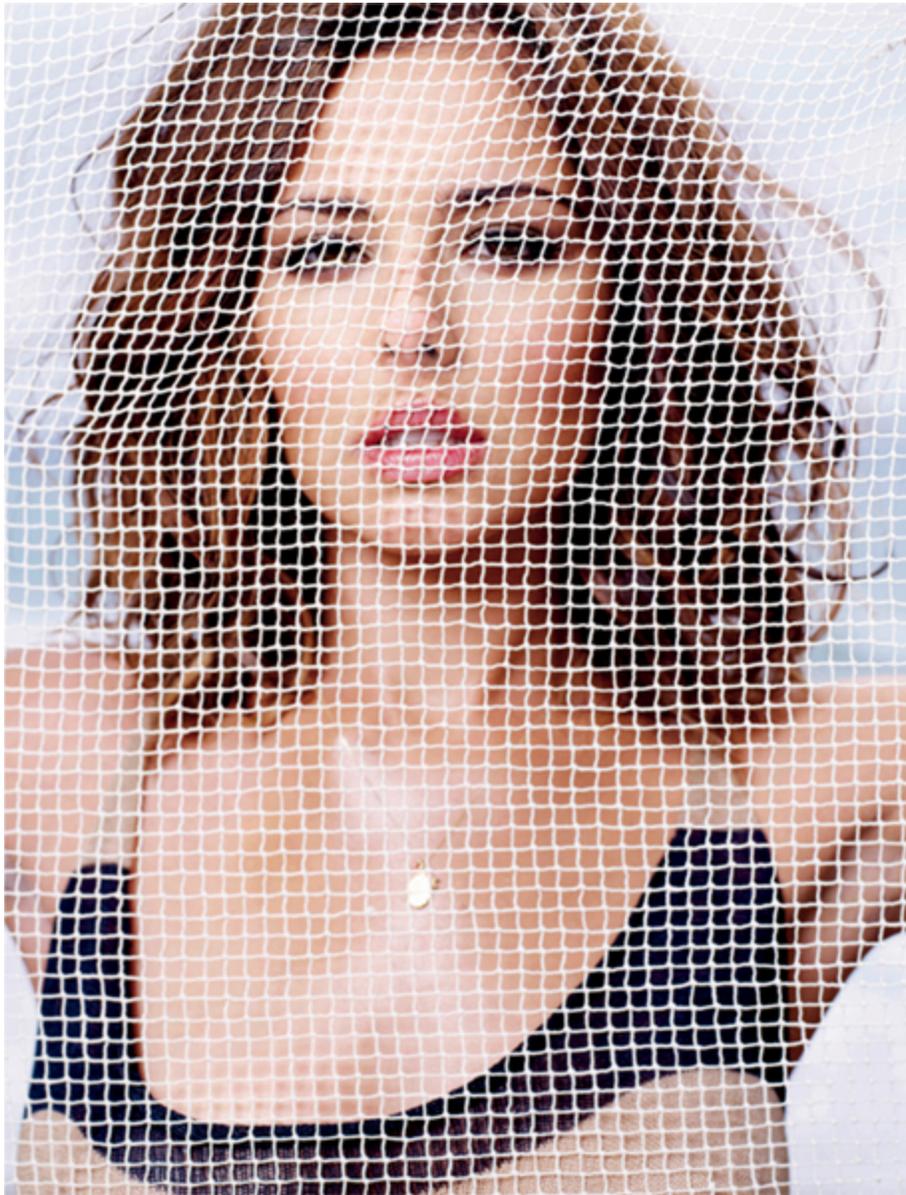
Love,



MUSIC

'The Start'





In 2009, we decided to take a break from Girls Aloud. During this time an opportunity came for me to make a solo album. Music and performing has always been my biggest passion, so this seemed like a natural step. I never plan where I want to be or what I want to be doing in the next five or ten years ... I believe everything happens for a reason.

Even when I was a kid I somehow knew I was meant to be some kind of entertainer. I was always singing and dancing. It was all I was interested in, it was my dream. I never considered anything else.

Going solo after seven years with the girls was scary and exciting at the same time - but it definitely felt like the right thing to do. I was going back to the start and had to establish myself as a solo artist but I had the experience I'd gained from the girls to draw on.

I did a lot of the recording for my album *3 Words* in LA, as a lot of the producers I was working with are based out there. Will.i.am from the Black Eyed Peas was the executive producer on the album and was also a huge influence on me going solo. We first met in 2008 when I appeared in the video for his single 'Heartbreaker' and we got on straight away. I find him inspiring. He is a musical genius - everything you'd want from a producer and a person: creative, fascinating, intelligent, fun to be with. When I'm with him I feel like I'm learning constantly. He's a very special person, passionate to the core about what he does, and grateful for what he's achieved. I don't think he actually realizes how far he's come. He's very humble, and it was just easy writing and making music with him. Working with him is an absolute honour - I would work with him for the rest of my career if I could. I wrote four of the tracks on *3 Words* with him and for the others it was a case of listening to loads of stuff and picking what I liked.

I remember really clearly going into the studio for the first time to work on my solo material. I was with Will so it was all a bit nerve-racking. Actually, I was terrified. The track was 'Heaven', the first song I'd ever written with him, which was scary enough, then it was a case of learning how

he works. I was so nervous. I remember thinking, Oh, God, I hope he likes what I've done and this turns out all right.



It was just a case of getting on with it: I wanted to do the album and I couldn't have had anyone better to work with so I had to overcome my fear. He knew exactly how I was feeling and was great with me.

I've spent a bit of time in LA over the past couple of years and I really like it. It's amazing what a difference it makes when there's a bit of sun and you're in a new environment. If I woke up in my bed at home and got up to go into the studio knowing I was coming back at the end of the day I'd feel completely different. It's strange, but being out of my comfort zone is definitely a good thing, and I love it that the sun shines all the time. Who wouldn't?!

Even though I like it there and enjoy experiencing new places, I'm a real home person, so when I'm away I miss loads of things - just my cups of tea, that kind of ordinary everyday stuff. I miss the dogs like crazy. I used to talk to them on the phone but I don't now because I've discovered they're not interested. They don't listen!

I'm a creature of habit and I like to know where I'm at, what's going on, so it was weird to be working with new people on my album and not have the girls around. With GA material we'd talk to each other and get enthusiastic about songs; there'd always be somebody buzzing about. I'd also worked with Brian Higgins, who produced all our albums for seven years, so that was a huge comfort zone to step out of - I had to get to know new producers. At the same time, it was all fresh and exciting and challenging. It was a buzz.



In the past I'd co-written Girls Aloud album and B-side tracks but it was totally different doing my own stuff. I'd say it's more the kind of music I would listen to at home. The lyrics tend to reflect what I'd say about subjects I feel strongly about, so generally it feels more personal. I love what we've done with Girls Aloud so far and the British pop sound we're known for. We had a very specific formula - quirky lyrics, songs that sometimes didn't have choruses -

so what I'm doing now is different. My solo material's a little bit less pop and more urban-sounding.

The album was released in October 2009 and I couldn't believe that it went straight to number one, I was amazed. It still hasn't sunk in that it's gone triple platinum - I have the disc at home but it still doesn't seem real!



The first single, 'Fight For This Love', was written for me by Steve Kipner, Wayne Wilkins and Andre Merritt. I recorded it with Wayne in his studio in Santa Monica. He's English but now lives out in America. It was a really good experience, we really hit it off. He's just brilliant, so easy to record with - not scary or intimidating at all. I worked with him on the second album too.

When I first heard 'Fight' I found it very empowering because the lyric is so strong. It's got that feisty thing going for it. It seemed to sum up the way life can feel like one big fight sometimes and you've got to push your way through.

At that stage I wasn't thinking of it as the first single. While I was recording the album, everything was new for me, and it was only when the whole thing was completed and I was getting reactions from other people that I knew it was the track I wanted to release first.

With every song I have a picture in my head of how I want to perform it. I wouldn't be drawn to a song or feel like I'd connected with it unless I had that vision. When you're in the studio recording it's not just about singing, you're actually performing and capturing the emotion of the song, and that's what comes across when people listen to it.



When it came to the 'Fight For This Love' video it felt really odd being on my own and not having the girls around for support. 'Exposed' would be the right word. I was very nervous but I had a really cool director, Ray Kay, who has done some unbelievable videos with people like Lady GaGa and Beyoncé. I thoroughly enjoyed working with him. He's got a lovely calm vibe and he let me be free and be myself.



The dance scene in the video was really important to me. I liked that sense of being in a pack, right in the middle of the dancers, not out in front on my own, and Beth (Honan), my choreographer, came up with a routine that was just right. It's one thing knowing what you want but you need a good team to put your thoughts into action.

By the time we did the dance scene I'd been on set for a while but the nerves hadn't quite gone. I was full of adrenalin, heart pounding, and I could feel my fingers trembling. Plus, I was really unfit because I'd been so busy and there'd been no time to work out.



I love the way the video turned out. It felt really strong, just like the song, and the styling worked well. I have a lot of input in terms of what I wear and I go through ideas with Victoria (Adcock), my stylist. She creates what we call mood boards with lots of different looks and, based on those, I decide what I like. The red jacket was my favourite