

JOSH HICKS



Born in Newport, South Wales, 22-year-old Josh Hicks is a born entertainer. Whether taking up Ballroom and Latin dancing or writing and performing songs, from an early age Josh seemed destined for stardom.

Ever since picking up a microphone at the age of 11, singing has been Hicks' foremost joy. Inspired by his father's collection of Queen LPs and mother's love of '80s pop, he would become infatuated by modern-day vocalists such as Adele and Duffy, as well as timeless, classic songwriters including Billie Holliday, Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald.

In 2016, Hicks began recording cover versions while honing his live performance skills at Chepstow Castle and the region's local Lime Tree Café Bar. He would later attend the Academy of Contemporary Music to work on his vocal technique, graduating in 2020 with a First Class BA (Hon) degree.

Having abolished an attempt to enter the prestigious Open Mic UK in 2018, Hicks found a renewed sense of self-confidence. Writing and recording four original songs, he returned in 2021 to win the competition outright with judge Leon Haynes acclaiming his “very distinctive voice” and other expert panellists describing his stand-out vocal as “**unique**”, “**mesmerising**” and “**breath-taking**”.

Throughout 2021, Hicks accelerated his passion for songwriting, teaming up with production partner Shatterjack (a score writer for Netflix’s No. 1 mini-series *Anatomy of a Scandal* and comedies *Bridget Jones’s Baby* and *Brassic*) to work on newly crafted material. During the Covid lockdown, in an act of spontaneity reminiscent of his childhood yearning to entertain others, he even took his microphone and amp into the street to perform and lift the spirits of passers-by.

“Josh has a unique way of conveying the emotional message of his music exceptionally well. He was a very worthy winner.” - Chris Grayston, Founder & CEO of Open Mic UK

With a contemporary, classic pop sound that embodies soulful yet subtle jazz inclinations, while Hicks’ songs are aimed at younger audiences they’re equally able to cross the generational divide. Inspired by lyrical greats such as Cole Porter and Amy Winehouse, Hicks injects personality into his writing, drawn from personal experience and an active interest in men’s mental health.

Indeed, it was through the MS Society that Hicks fulfilled his dream of working with superstar singer/songwriter Emeli Sandé in a virtual songwriting session for his track *Roses and Lavender*. Later, in a show of appreciation for NHS workers, he would sing lead vocals on the charity NHS song, *Let’s Say Thanks*.

Scouted by Music Gateway’s Head of A&R, Hicks currently remains steadfastly focused on honing his songwriting skills. His dream remains to sign to a major record label, record at the world-famous Metropolis Studios and perform at The Jazz Café in London – and you wouldn’t bet against him achieving all three. For now, however, Hicks is looking to sign a recording contract, secure his first publishing deal and develop his fan base through live performance, with his new band showcasing at the Coleford Music Festival this summer.

Meanwhile, with its rich piano refrains, modern, polished melodies and emotionally observant lyrics, Hicks’ debut single *Self Seeking (The Highest Order of Selfishness)* pays testament to his stunning falsetto vocal and innate ability to write life-affirming songs. Set for release at the end of this year, the track provides all the evidence you need that this bright young star is set to shine.

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