



The Voice UK Press Pack Interviews



**Must credit: The Voice UK airs Saturday 31st August, 8pm on ITV1 & ITVX**

**Under strict embargo until Tuesday 27th August, 00:01**



### **Emma Willis**

#### **Tell us about this series and what can viewers expect?**

They can expect a really fun series packed with incredible talent, new coaches, higher energy than usual which is hard to top but once you add Tom and Danny into the mix, those levels go even higher. As always it is a really enjoyable and heartwarming watch. Great for the whole family!

#### **What has the talent been like so far? Do you have any stand out performances?**

It has been amazing, I always kind of wonder when the talent pool is going to run dry, and it just doesn't! I feel like there is a really good mix this year of lots of different genres and we've got loads of different age groups as well. I say it every year but it is one of my favourite weeks of my working year because it is just like going to a week-long gig and you just watch brilliant performances all day long!

#### **We have three new coaches this year, LeAnn Rimes, Tom Fletcher and Danny Jones, what dynamics do they bring to the team?**

LeAnn is amazing. It blows me away that she has been in the business for 30 years. She started as a kid, so she has a wealth of knowledge and is brilliant as a coach. She also does The Voice Australia, so she knows exactly how it all works and excels in the chair.

She is very competitively spirited, especially with Tom and Danny. They have a funny dynamic when they pitch against each other, so having her on board has been awesome!

It's hard for me to describe Tom and Danny because they are my mates, and I know exactly what they are like. They are full of fun and genuinely committed to coaching and encouraging everyone on their team

Danny is used to being in the chair because he has done The Voice Kids, but for Tom, it was all new. Tom was nervous, which was really weird to see because he wears so many different hats and is brilliant at everything he does. You'd think he would just slide straight into it.

**In a new twist Tom and Danny are sat on a double chair and have to agree in order to turn the chair, has there been many disagreements between the boys?**

No there hasn't been and I think that is what is so great about having two people like that in a double chair because they are best mates and they have been in a band together for two decades! They have different tastes in music, but they are like brothers, so they know each other really well. I think they appreciate each other's viewpoint, and they know how to work with that because they have had to do that for so many years. I think they agreed most of the time as well!

**Are the new coaches competitive and what tactics do they use to make sure they get picked?**

They are very competitive, but it is all done in a very innocent and fun way. LeAnn has got a wealth of knowledge and experience, and she is so charming - you kind of instantly fall in love with how lovely she is! Will has been there since the beginning, and he is Will! And Tom has been doing this for seventy years or something, so he is really hard to say no to! And then the boys are absolutely utterly charming! Tom when he gets his song pitches going is brilliant - if you have ever seen Tom's YouTube video of his wedding speech then you will know how good he is at singing a pitch. They all enjoy the playful competitiveness and have their own unique ways of doing it.

**Which coach jokes about the most?**

I would probably say Tom, Danny and LeAnn like the new kids at school!

**What do you love the most about The Voice?**

I just love the fact that people can have a platform to show how phenomenal they are and to show their talent. I love that it is something you can watch with the whole family, it's a really encouraging and positive show. And I love the people that work on it both on screen and off screen. It is one of my favourite things that I do and that's why I keep going back because it just feels like home to me.

**Will.i.am let you have a go in his chair last year, has he let you have another go this year especially as you turned for the winners last series?**

No, he hasn't but I really wanted to have another go as I am really good at picking winners but maybe next series. I did try and get in between Tom and Danny and sit on the arm and muscle in between them but they were having none of it! Maybe LeAnn will let me create a pretend double chair with her.



### **Sir Tom Jones**

**How does it feel to be back?**

It feels great to be back - I love doing The Voice.

**What are you looking for this year?**

I'm always listening for something that surprises me, something that is not run of the mill. Sometimes people want to sound like someone else, but I want someone individual and natural.

**Tell us about this series and what can viewers expect?**

We have our new coaches, LeAnn, Danny and Tom, joining myself and Will. It has brought a fresh energy to the show.

What amazes me is the brilliant voices that we discover every single year. This year we have a fresh bunch of singers and that's what we are looking for. I look at The Voice being an amazing platform for our homegrown singers to showcase to the world.

**What has the talent been like so far? Do you have any stand out performances?**

There are quite a few and of course they are all on my team haha. I have three great acts, they are all different, unique and have brilliant voices.

**What do LeAnn, Tom and Danny bring to the panel?**

I think the strength in the variety of coaches is that we are all listening for completely different things, which makes it interesting.

**Who is the most competitive?**

I think Will can be competitive. He is sneaky and sometimes he tries to hide if he is going to hit the button.

**You are in great shape, what's your secret?**

I continue to work a lot and do gigs all over the world – basically, I love being on stage.

**What is the best advice you have been given over the years?**

Be yourself. Don't try to copy somebody - take advice from people but at the end of the day you have to make your own decisions.

**Do you remember the first time you ever went on stage?**

I used to get on stage at school as a kid but when I was 17, the first time was in my local working men's club...I should have been 18 to be there!

Somebody didn't turn up one night and they used to have these concert parties, so the secretary of the club said can you get up and give us a few songs.

**So many people around the world look up to you, who did you look up to when you were starting out?**

There was a singer called Brook Benton who I admired very much. When I was young I always tended to listen to - without realising it - Black American gospel singers, that's who I gravitated towards.



### Will.i.am

#### **What's the talent level like this series and can you tell us about your team?**

The talent level this series is blazing - it's next level. We have a lot of great artists this year to showcase.

#### **You won last year, what are you looking for this year?**

This year I am looking to shed light on my artists dreams and to give them a path. Sometimes little nuggets go a long way.

#### **Who is the most competitive among the coaches this year?**

It's got to be Danny and Tom. This is Danny's first time with the adults away from The Voice Kids and Tom's first time on The Voice, so they are bringing a lot of energy.

I loved working with Danny on the kids Voice and he has brought the same excitement and energy to this series, alongside Tom.

#### **Why do you think there is so much undiscovered talent and would you encourage aspiring singers to continue to post their music on social media despite viral songs?**

Every year someone realises they can fix themselves through the world of music, shed light and inspire other folks. When you realise that you can bring your own self joy and in the process you can bring joy to other people, providing them with an escape.

Everyday a star is born, I know that sounds corny but it's true.

**What type of music/singer is really on the rise at the moment?**

Singers that bring truth to their lyrics and style. In a sea of mimics and gimmicks, cookie cutter copies, the ones that shine are the ones who are unique and you cannot replace.

**Hard question to answer but in the music industry who has been your biggest influence over the years?**

Stevie Wonder for me, longevity wise. Lionel Richie has transformed through all types of music, he was doing country music way before anyone else, also soul music and pop music.

**What do you love most about being a coach on The Voice?**

I get to come to the UK, I love it here. Sharing perspective with my artists is always great.



### LeAnn Rimes

#### **How does it feel to be in the UK?**

It's great. It just feels like a second home to me now and everyone is so welcoming here.

#### **Have you worked or met with any of the coaches before?**

I met Sir Tom when I was 15 years old at Top of the Pops. I know I have met Will in passing and I had never met Danny and Tom until the show. It's been so fun to hang out with them all and I feel like the chemistry on the show is amazing.

#### **What kind of singers can we expect on Team LeAnn?**

I think I have a lot of very individual artists which is so important. I feel like all of my artists have a strong sense of self and they don't try to copy anything that they have heard before. They all have a strong sense of who they are and are unique - of course they have great voices and a lot of soul.

#### **What makes a good voice?**

I love when someone is a great technical singer, I think it's a huge plus. As a coach and a listener it puts you at ease as you know they have great pitch and tone. Mainly what I look for is someone who can tell a story. First it's about creating that connection and conveying emotion in someone else. If you have all of that in one person then you have magic.



**Who is the most competitive out of the coaches?**

I am competitive, but I'm here for more than winning. I'm here to truly support my artists and help them grow. That's the real win! Ultimately, it's really about the artists, they are the ones who are competing and they're just taking us coaches along for the ride.

We are all competitive but in a good way. Everyone has their own style in how they slide in there to pitch to the singers, it's really funny. my "style" is to always speak from my heart.

**What do you love most about being a coach on the voice?**

I knew I was going to enjoy it but not as much as I have. I love connecting with all of the artists, finding songs they connect to and creating these performances. For me it's not just about creating performances but creating moments that are really powerful.

**What's the hardest thing about being in the music industry?**

I've been in this business over 30 years and I am one of the fortunate ones that people still want to listen to after all this time. one of the hardest parts is the ups and downs - learning to ride the rollercoaster and learning as an artist to just do your work, do what moves you and hopefully people connect to it.

**What's your coaching style?**

I am really hands on. Constantly sending emails to my artists, checking in on them - working with them on calming their nerves, on the technicalities of their vocals, refining their inner dialogue and mental game... basically, I'm their biggest cheerleader!

**Hard question to answer but in the music industry who has been your biggest influence over the years?**

I have so many! I started off listening to Judy Garland, Barbara Streisand and Patsy Cline. As I got older I really got into Janis Joplin, Aerosmith and Prince. It's all across the board for me musically, I love anything that moves me.



### **Danny Jones & Tom Fletcher**

#### **Danny, how does this version differ from the kids version?**

Danny: The biggest difference between this and The Voice Kids is that the kids come onto the show purely for their passion for singing, so there's less pressure and it's all about having fun. With the adults there's a record deal at the end of it all, so you've got a lot more responsibility as a coach. The similarity is that all the talent is amazing, you get the same awesome buzz when you're putting someone through and of course we've bought a lot of the fun from the kids version!

Tom: We definitely have a lot of fun on the show!

#### **Tom, has Danny given you any advice on what it's like to be a coach?**

Tom: Danny's experience on The Voice kids has been an amazing help. It's quite intense being in the chair, understanding that this is someone's big moment and it all comes down to your opinion. Having Danny's experience from The Voice Kids definitely helped me to relax.

#### **In a new twist you are sitting in a double chair and have to agree in order to turn the chair, has there been many disagreements?**

Tom: There hasn't really been any disagreements but we only get 90 seconds to make our choice, so sometimes we might second guess ourselves, whilst trying to figure out what

each other are thinking. You never want to talk over someone's performance, so we're trying to work out each other's facial expressions.

Tom: There was one audition where Danny literally grabbed my hand to press the button - because I was wavering and taking my time.

Danny: And there was another one that you turned for and I was like 'what are you doing?!'

Tom: That's part of the double chair. You have to trust your partner. If Danny hears something that I don't, you have to trust your partner.

Danny: You have to telepathically talk!

### **What are you looking for?**

Tom: The winner! Ultimately, you really want someone to have an amazing moment, whether they win or not. You want people who really deserve to be a part of the show and you base all of your decisions on your gut feeling.

Danny: That's another thing I have found that is different between the adults and The Voice Kids. With the kids they don't know who they are yet, but with the adults there is something different. They're all such good singers, but what is the thing that makes them special?

Who is the most competitive out of the two of you?

Danny: We both are. We are very much on par!

### **What do you love most about being coaches on The Voice?**

Tom: Knowing that you are part of someone's journey is really special. The flip side of that is when you say no to someone, that's really heartbreaking as we know what it feels like.

Danny: I've loved pitching with my mate. Pitching on your own to the talent is hard but pitching with your mate is amazing. You've got someone to bounce off, it's really cool.

### **Has anything funny happened on set? Anybody playing any practical jokes?**

Danny: We've had a few laugh attacks, a few giggles. It's just been genuinely a lot of fun. There is a lot of funny back and forth between the other coaches as well.

### **What's the best advice you've ever been given in the music industry?**

Tom: Be the band you want to be and not the band you think you are. I'm still trying to decipher what that really means. That advice came from Tom DeLonge from Blink 182.

### **Hard question to answer but in the music industry who has been your biggest influence over the years?**

Danny: Mine is Bruce Springsteen, every time. Just the way he does everything - it's almost annoying because I know I will never be that cool. Liam Gallagher is another one and Justin Vernon from Bon Iver.

Tom: When I was a kid my biggest inspiration was Bryan Adams. Beach Boys and The Beatles are massive musical influences for me.

**-ENDS-**

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