

Kylie the ardent Aussie turns down King's coronation concert

Valentine Low

Kylie Minogue has turned down an invitation to perform at the coronation concert at Windsor Castle due to growing republican sentiment in her native Australia, it was claimed yesterday.

Minogue, who took part in a concert to celebrate the Queen's 92nd birthday at the Royal Albert Hall in 2018, was previously reported to be one of the stars in the line-up for the show on the day after the coronation on May 6.

A spokesman for the singer said that she would not be appearing because she would be out of the country on May 7,

The Mail on Sunday reported. A source close to Minogue, 54, told the newspaper: "She was approached by the team that has been tasked with getting a great line-up of stars and there has been some back and forth.

"However, she has very recently decided that she doesn't think it is the right thing to do. While Kylie has been an honorary Brit for many, many years, and admires the royal family and everything that they do, she is also a passionate Australian and has read the room in a country that could very soon become a republic."

Minogue's spokesman said: "Kylie

very much regrets that she isn't able to perform at the King's coronation concert as she will be out of the country.

"This is hugely disappointing for Kylie, who has met King Charles many times and has a very good relationship with him. She has sent her best wishes to King Charles for this historic occasion."

In 2021 Minogue said she had decided to move back to Australia after three decades of being based in London. "I wanted to spend more time with my family," she said.

Performers who are understood to be set to appear at the concert include



Kylie Minogue was said to be "hugely" upset and sent Charles her best wishes

Take That — without Robbie Williams — and Lionel Ritchie.

Elton John, the Spice Girls and Harry Styles have all been reported as unable to make it because of their busy schedules. Adele and Ed Sheeran are also said to have turned down invitations.

● The late Queen's corgis are spoiled with gravy bones but remain "very polite and well trained", the Duchess of York has told Hello! magazine. The monarch received the dogs, Muick and Sandy, as gifts from the Duke of York and after her death in September they were adopted by him and his former wife, with whom he lives.

Campaigners' fears after Harry praises illegal drugs

Valentine Low

A drug education campaigner whose teenage son died after taking MDMA at a rave spoke of her concern after the Duke of Sussex described how his use of narcotics "really" helped him mentally.

In a live interview with a trauma expert, Prince Harry talked about his use of cocaine, marijuana and alcohol, and also told how taking one hallucinogenic drug, ayahuasca, "changed me", describing its effect as like "cleaning the windscreen".

Fiona Spargo-Mabbs set up the Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation, a drugs education charity, in her son's memory. She said she feared that it sent out the wrong message to young people for Harry to talk about using drugs as a coping mechanism. Her son was 16 when he died after taking MDMA while out with friends in 2014.

An expert in alternative medicine also warned against taking ayahuasca. Edzard Ernst, a former professor of complementary medicine at Exeter University, said: "Ayahuasca is an under-researched botanical hallucinogenic drug that has shown some promise in the treatment of depression, anxiety and substance abuse. Even though it is often considered to be relatively safe, adverse effects have been reported, some of which are serious. I would certainly not recommend it to anyone for therapeutic or recreational use."

In the live interview with Dr Gabor Maté, author of *The Myth Of Normal: Trauma, Illness & Healing In A Toxic Culture*, Harry said: "[Cocaine] didn't do

anything for me, it was more a social thing and gave me a sense of belonging.

"Marijuana is different, that actually really did help me." Talking about his use of psychedelics, such as ayahuasca, he said: "It was the cleaning of the windscreen ... the removal of life's filters.

"It removed it all for me and brought me a sense of relaxation, release, comfort, a lightness that I managed to hold on to for a period of time. I started doing it recreationally and then started to realise how good it was for me. It is one of the fundamental parts of my life that changed me and helped me deal with the traumas and pains of the past."

Spargo-Mabbs, who was appointed OBE in the new year honours list for services to young people, said: "Many



Daniel Spargo-Mabbs died aged 16 after a night out

young people have been struggling with their mental health under Covid and since Covid. Finding ways to cope, especially when the services to support them are so stretched, is understandable.

"Messages that drugs can help you cope with difficult things is a worry as it may influence the behaviour of young people, who are so much more vulnerable. In adolescence, because of the stage of development you are at, taking drugs has a potentially more lasting impact than it does at any other time of life."



The remarks by the Duke of Sussex came in a live interview with the trauma expert Dr Gabor Maté on Saturday evening

Profile

Gabor Maté, the Canadian-Hungarian author of *The Myth Of Normal: Trauma, Illness And Healing In A Toxic Culture*, is an outspoken supporter of decriminalising drugs who once likened Hamas terrorists to Jewish "heroes" who fought the Nazis (Valentine Low writes).

He has used ayahuasca to treat

addicts. The Amazonian plant, taken as a thick tea, causes people to experience hallucinations and other side-effects, including vomiting.

However, it is illegal in Canada and in 2011 he was threatened with arrest by the government if he did not stop using it to treat his patients. He reluctantly agreed.

Maté, 79, who was

born in Hungary, had a traumatic upbringing. He lost his maternal grandparents in the Holocaust and was separated from his mother as a baby in order to save his life.

He was unable to look at her when they were reunited because of the trauma of "abandonment, rage and despair", which lasted into his adult life.

Using drugs as a coping strategy is more likely to lead to addiction, she said. "It's really important that people access proper support, such as talking therapies, and even reaching out to a friend for help is a better approach."

● King Charles will allow Harry and Meghan to stay at Buckingham Palace when they visit Britain in the future, a source has told The Mail on Sunday, adding that while the King was "furious" with the prince over his attacks on the royal family, he had no wish "to deprive the Sussexes of a base in the UK". The source added: "London is a better fit. The Sussexes have always wanted rooms at Buckingham Palace."

Addiction and childhood trauma, Dr Gabor Maté, Times2 Dopey Harry does his followers a disservice, Libby Purves, page 23

Comedian mocks Meghan over suggestions of royal family racism

Keiran Southern Los Angeles

Chris Rock has mocked the Duchess of Sussex for suggesting the royal family was racist during her bombshell interview with Oprah Winfrey.

The American comedian performed a highly awaited stand-up special that was broadcast live on Netflix on Saturday night, during which he addressed Will Smith slapping him at last year's Oscars.

Rock also took aim at what he said was a society-wide urge to be a "victim"

and criticised the duchess for her claims against the royal family.

"Meghan Markle seemed like a nice lady," Rock, 58, said during his Selective Outrage set, before adding that she began "just complaining" despite winning the "light-skin lottery".

He accused her of "acting all dumb" during the March 2021 interview in which she alleged a member of the royal family had speculated over the skin tone of Archie, her first child with the Duke of Sussex.

"Some of that s*** she went through

was not racism," he said. "It was just some in-law s***." Impersonating Meghan, Rock said: "Oprah, they're so racist they wanted to know how brown the baby was going to be.

"I'm like, 'That's not racist, because even black people want to know how brown the baby going to be.'"

Rock also joked about claims of historical racism against the royals and the institution's role in colonialism, alleging that Meghan should have had a greater understanding of its history. He said: "That's like marrying into the

Budweiser family and going, 'They drink a lot.'"

Rock also referenced the moment Smith, 54, slapped him at the Oscars after he made a joke about the actor's wife, Jada Pinkett Smith. Rock mocked Pinkett Smith's bald head, leading to a furious response from her husband.

"It still hurts," Rock said, "but I'm not a victim, baby. You'll never see me on Oprah or Gayle [King] crying ... I took that hit like [the boxer, Manny] Pacquiao." He accused Smith of practising "selective outrage" and said

plenty of figures in the entertainment industry had mocked the *Men in Black* star after his wife admitted to having an "entanglement" with a younger man.

Smith sat down for an interview with his wife to discuss her relationship with the rapper August Alsina. "We've all been cheated on," Rock said. "Everybody has been cheated on. None of us have ever been interviewed by the person that cheated on us on television." Explaining why he did not hit Smith back, Rock said his parents had taught him, "don't fight in front of white people."