

= Alesha Dixon =

Alesha Dixon (born 7 October 1978) is a British singer , dancer , rapper , model and television presenter from Welwyn Garden City , England . She found fame in the all @-@ female R & B / garage trio Mis @-@ Teeq . The trio disbanded in 2005 and Dixon pursued a music career as a solo artist , signing to Polydor Records . She began recording her debut solo album , Fired Up , in 2006 , but due to poor record sales of her first two singles , " Lipstick " and " Knockdown " , she was dropped from Polydor .

In 2007 , Dixon won Strictly Come Dancing . Her television exposure led to a successful comeback , which included her signing to Asylum Records , an offshoot of Warner Music Group . Dixon then released a second album , entitled The Alesha Show , in 2008 , which received platinum certification from BPI in the UK and spawned four singles including " The Boy Does Nothing " and " Breathe Slow " , the latter of which became her highest charting single and earned her a Brit Award nomination .

In September 2009 , Dixon became a judge on the seventh series of Strictly Come Dancing , replacing Arlene Phillips . The replacement of Phillips by Dixon attracted criticism , as some questioned the extent of Dixon 's dancing knowledge . Or any knowledge of talent In 2010 , Dixon returned for the eighth series of Strictly Come Dancing and released her third studio album , The Entertainer . In January 2012 , shortly after completing the ninth series and her third year as a judge on Strictly Come Dancing , Dixon quit to become a judge on Britain 's Got Talent .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life = = =

Alesha Anjanette Dixon was born in Welwyn Garden City to a Jamaican father , Melvin , and English mother , Beverly Harris . Dixon has six half @-@ siblings . Maternally , she has two half @-@ brothers , and on her father 's side , she has three half @-@ brothers and a half @-@ sister .

She was educated at Monk 's Walk School , Welwyn Garden City , Hertfordshire . Dixon 's parents split up when Dixon was four and Dixon 's father moved away , resulting in Dixon later describing her family life as " very dysfunctional " . Between the ages of eight and ten , Dixon witnessed her mother suffer domestic violence from her partner ; she only spoke publicly about the issue 21 years later , in 2010 . Dixon created a documentary for the BBC , Don 't Hit My Mum , regarding the issue of domestic abuse from a child 's perspective , and remarked upon her own childhood : " When I think about that time , I don 't remember living in harmony , I don 't remember any fun times , I suppose because the negativity has clouded it . The negative times and the scary times have blocked anything that was good ... I believe that every child has the right to grow up in an environment where they feel secure and fearless going into the world , and I didn 't really feel that " .

Dixon 's first job was at Ladbroke's , although she aspired to become a PE teacher after leaving college . After completing a diploma course in sports studies , she had planned to take up a place at Loughborough University , but whilst at dance classes in London she was approached by a talent scout from a production company . Whilst travelling back home on the train she was approached by another scout who was forming a band and asked if she was interested .

= = = 1999 ? 2005 : Mis @-@ Teeq = = =

Dixon 's career began in 1999 when she met Sabrina Washington as they both joined a dance school in Fulham , south west London . Together , they decided to form a band when Dixon and Washington , the two co @-@ founders , spotted Su @-@ Elise Nash , a girl auditioning for another band . Dixon and Washington proposed that Nash join the group and together they formed a trio . They were soon signed to Telstar Records with the addition of a new member , Zena McNally , and

became the popular UK garage / R & B girl band , Mis @-@ Teeq .

In October 2000 , Dixon , then relatively unknown , featured on the single " Rumours " by Damage , which charted modestly at 22 on the UK Singles Chart . The genre of the track departed from the band 's R & B style , in favour of a garage @-@ based sound , however , the tepid reaction from fans insured Damage did not venture further into garage .

In January 2001 , Mis @-@ Teeq released their first single , " Why " . The track remained commercially unnoticed until a garage remix was produced and the track charted at 8 in April of that year . Two separate music videos for the song were filmed , accompanying the different versions of the song . The song 's success coincided with Zena McNally 's departure ; McNally later alleged that friction between herself and Washington was a factor . Mis @-@ Teeq , continuing as a trio , then released " All I Want " , which charted even more successfully at number 2 , behind Shaggy 's " Angel " . In October 2001 , they released their debut album Lickin ' On Both Sides , featuring hits " One Night Stand " , " B with Me " and double A @-@ side single " Roll On / This Is How We Do It " . In 2002 , Mis @-@ Teeq performed and received a nomination at the BRIT Awards in Earls Court , later in the year band won the MOBO Award for Best Garage Act . After the success of their debut album , 2003 saw Mis @-@ Teeq becoming the faces of JD Sports stores nationwide .

In 2003 , Mis @-@ teeq released their second album Eye Candy , which included the singles " Scandalous " , " Can 't Get It Back " and " Style " . In 2004 , Mis @-@ Teeq toured the United States and released their debut single " Scandalous " from their American self @-@ titled debut , a compilation of the albums Lickin ' On Both Sides and Eye Candy .

In 2004 , Dixon went to feature in the N.E.R.D music video " She Wants to Move " . In the video , she is shown dancing on a podium while the band circle her . It was also rumoured that she was dating Pharrell Williams around the time of the video . The last song Dixon recorded with Mis @-@ Teeq was " Shoo Shoo Baby " for the Disney film Valiant . In March 2005 , their Greatest Hits compilation was released and it was announced that they were separating to pursue solo careers .

= = = 2006 ? 08 : Fired Up , record label departure and Strictly Come Dancing = = =

Dixon launched her solo career after Mis @-@ Teeq 's break @-@ up and signed a £ 500 @,@ 000 , three @-@ album deal with Polydor Records . She spent a year writing and recording her solo debut album , Fired Up , working with a wide range of producers including Richard X , Xenomania , Johnny Douglas , Brian Higgins , Estelle and Paul Epworth . During this period , Dixon performed mononymously , known simply as " Alesha " . In June 2005 , she announced her first solo single to be " Superficial " . However , at the last minute , the song " Lipstick " was chosen as the first single . " Lipstick " was released on 14 August 2006 , and charted at 14 on the UK Single Charts .

Dixon released her second single " Knockdown " on 30 October 2006 , which charted at 25 on the UK Download Chart . However , on the official UK Singles Charts , the single peaked at number 45 , falling down to 68 the following week . On 6 November 2006 , it was revealed that Dixon had been dropped by her label , Polydor Records . Polydor gave her full rights to her unreleased debut album , Fired Up . Coinciding with her professional troubles was the collapse of her marriage to Harvey ; Dixon filed for divorce just over a year after her wedding due to her husband 's affair with Javine Hylton .

Dixon took part in series 5 of TV show Strictly Come Dancing in 2007 , partnered with professional dancer Matthew Cutler . Dixon was at first hesitant to join , fearing that snobbery within the music industry would damage her career . In a later interview , she said , " there 's always this preconceived idea that people do reality TV shows because they want to kick @-@ start their careers whereas I was actually worried that it would affect it . " They had been the favourite from the third week , receiving the most points from the judges on numerous occasions . Dixon herself gained high appraisal from the judges , even being likened to a " young Josephine Baker " by Bruno Tonioli . They received 4 @.@ 5 million votes in the final , beating actor Matt Di Angelo and professional dancer Flavia Cacace to win the glitter disco ball . Dixon is currently the most successful contestant to ever take part in Strictly Come Dancing , with an average point score of 36 @.@ 5 / 40 , the highest average score from any contestant to ever take part in the show .

== 2008 ? 09 : The Alesha Show and Strictly Come Dancing judging ==

After her victory on Strictly Come Dancing , Dixon soon became the centre of a bidding war between record labels and even Polydor Records , the label that had dropped her months previously , put in an offer . Dixon , however , chose to sign a four @-@ album contract with Asylum Records in 2008 . Dixon 's first new album as part of her contract , The Alesha Show was released in the UK on 24 November 2008 and 21 November in Ireland . The official first single from the album , " The Boy Does Nothing " became her first solo top ten hit on the UK Singles Chart , following a 76 spot jump from 84 to 8 on the UK Singles Chart on downloads alone ; the single eventually peaked at number 5 and received Gold certification . The song also became a commercial success in continental Europe and peaked in the top ten on the Australian Singles Chart . The single sold 1 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 copies worldwide .

The second single from The Alesha Show was " Breathe Slow " and entered the UK Singles Chart at number thirty @-@ nine solely on download sales . The single rose for three weeks before breaking into the top ten at number six , giving Dixon her second top ten hit in the UK from downloads alone , and eventually peaked at number 3 on the Top 40 UK Charts , becoming Dixon 's highest charting single on the UK Singles Chart . " Breathe Slow " was certified Silver in the UK for sales exceeding 200 @, @ 000 .

The third single from The Alesha Show , titled " Let 's Get Excited " was physically released on 11 May and reached a peak position of 13 in the UK Singles Chart . " Let 's Get Excited " became Dixon 's first track from The Alesha Show not to chart inside the top 10 in the UK Singles Chart . The song 's presence in the charts boosted album sales and The Alesha Show rebounded at a new peak of 11 . The album received Platinum certification from BPI , indicating sales of 300 @, @ 000 + in the UK alone . The fourth single from The Alesha Show , called " To Love Again " was released on 15 November 2009 . The track , a ballad penned by Dixon and Gary Barlow , was the first single taken from the deluxe version , entitled The Alesha Show ? Encore , released on 23 November . Dixon also embarked upon a 17 @-@ date national tour , named The Alesha Show , which began on 20 October 2009 in Nottingham .

It was revealed in July 2009 that Dixon would be joining the Strictly Come Dancing judging panel in September 2009 . She replaced Arlene Phillips , which led to the BBC being accused of ageism and sexism by the media . Dixon , having a conflicting schedule also had to rearrange three dates on her upcoming tour , The Alesha Show to do the show , which is broadcast live on Saturday nights .

Dixon 's judging debut was met by criticism by some viewers , and 272 complaints were received by the BBC , according to The Guardian . Despite the complaints , the BBC stated they were " delighted " with Dixon .

== 2010 ? 11 : The Entertainer ==

In early 2010 , Dixon began work on her third studio album , The Entertainer , which she intended to release during the summer . On 15 March Dixon flew to Denmark to begin recording with Soulshock & Karlin , the producers of Dixon 's " Breathe Slow " . Dixon 's fan site later reported that Dixon had secured a recording session with Rodney Jerkins , a record producer who has produced records for Michael Jackson 's final studio album Invincible and most recently produced Lady Gaga and Beyoncé 's " Telephone " .

On 16 June , Dixon revealed on a post on her fansite that the upcoming album would be called Unleashed , and on 30 June her fansite president revealed the lead single is a track called " Drummer Boy " , produced by Haitian @-@ American producer , Shama Joseph , or " ShamRock " . On 5 August it was revealed that Dixon had decided to change the album name from Unleashed to The Entertainer . " Drummer Boy " , released in August , charted moderately at 15 on the UK Singles Chart . On 16 September , it was announced that Dixon had collaborated with Roll Deep and featured in the band 's single " Take Control " . The track appeared on both Roll Deep 's album ? Winner Stays On ? and The Entertainer . " Radio " , billed as The Entertainer 's second single ,

charted poorly upon release in November 2010 , failing to reach the Top 40 . The single 's release coincided with the release of the album , which too made little commercial impact ; a year later it was noted that the album had sold 60 @, @ 000 copies .

Acknowledging the album 's lack of commercial success , Dixon said she would always prefer to " take a chance creatively " than release what she perceived to be stultifying records . She commented : " I knew the single ' Drummer Boy ' was a risk . It was a very difficult record and so far removed from anything I 'd done before . I get that ... I take full responsibility for that , but I 'm glad I did it . I 'd rather make a unique record like ' Drummer Boy ' and have it fail than play it safe and release bland , generic music that doesn 't excite me . "

= = = 2012 ? 2014 : Britain 's Got Talent , motherhood and other ventures = = =

Dixon wrote and released a new track " Do It Our Way " for the New Year Weight Watchers campaign which featured in new advertisements for the organisation . The track was released onto iTunes on 1 January 2012 , as a digital download . On 2 January , Dixon announced her departure from her judging role on Strictly Come Dancing , to pursue other projects . It was later announced that she left the panel to join the judging panel of Britain 's Got Talent along with Simon Cowell , Amanda Holden and David Walliams . Michael Hogan , of The Daily Telegraph , pointed out that " if rumours are to be believed , Dixon has more than tripled her salary by defecting to the commercial channel " , a point made by various other sources .

In September 2012 it was announced that Dixon would be collaborating with former So Solid Crew rapper Ashley Walters on his new song " Your Love " . The single was released on 11 November . In 2013 , Dixon resumed her role as a judge for the seventh series .

It was announced in June 2013 that Dixon was expecting her first child with her partner , former backing dancer Azuka Ononye , and on her 35th birthday , 7 October , 2013 , she stated on Twitter that she had given birth to her daughter , Azura Sienna , the previous week . Dixon said she would put her fourth album on hold and concentrate on motherhood , but in summer 2013 she and Paddy McGuinness presented ITV 's new entertainment show Your Face Sounds Familiar . The programme was not renewed for a second series .

Dixon returned for the eighth series of Britain 's Got Talent in 2014 . Dixon also joined the Text Santa presenting team in December 2014 ? ITV 's annual Christmas charity telethon .

= = = 2015 ? present : Do It for Love = = =

In December 2014 she announced that she would be releasing a new single in either March or May 2015 . An album release is expected to follow , which will be her first in five years . In January 2015 she returned for the ninth series of Britain 's Got Talent . In March , Dixon confirmed she would be releasing her new single " The Way We Are " , via her own record label Precious Stone Records , on 21 June . The music video premiered in full on Vevo on 19 May . The video was filmed on Paphos , Cyprus and fans were given the opportunity to choose the video 's ending from three options . The first live performance will take place on the Britain 's Got Talent live shows in May . It will be her first single release in over four years , following 2011 's " Every Little Part of Me " .

Dixon premièred album track , " Azura (Blue Sky) " during Graham Norton 's BBC Radio 2 show in May 2015 . She also explained that the song " Do It for Love " was the first song she had written for the album and was a song about her love for music .

Dixon revealed the album 's title as Do It for Love in an Official Charts interview . " Tallest Girl " was released 18 September 2015 as the second single from the album with an accompanying music video , directed by De La Muerte Films . The third single from the album was " People Need Love " . The song has been reworked by Ash Rows for the official single version . Ash Rows has also been responsible for reworking Girls Aloud 's " Whole Lotta History " official single version . " People Need Love " was released on 11 December 2015 .

She was criticised for forgetting the words to " God Save the Queen " when performing a solo at the 2015 British Grand Prix .

= = Artistry = =

= = = Musical style = = =

When Dixon first emerged into the public spotlight with Mis @-@ Teeq , she was primarily the group 's MC , whilst one of her band @-@ mates Sabrina Washington usually sang lead vocals on the records . Washington encouraged her to rap from the band 's inception , saying : " When she started she was a bit shy , but I always said that it adds something , an element of difference . It was the first time I 'd ever heard a woman MC and I was like , ' Alesha , you have got to do that , ' and she was like ' No Bri , don 't make me look stupid ' " . However , when she began her solo career her first UK album , The Alesha Show , saw Dixon undergo a genre @-@ shift . The album featured no rapping and was primarily R & B and soul , unlike Mis @-@ Teeq 's music , which focused mainly on garage and hip hop . Dixon commented that the record consisted of " a lot more guitar @-@ written songs with pop produced around it " . Dixon's third album The Entertainer consists mainly of uptempo pop and dance @-@ pop tracks .

Dixon , a songwriter and singer , often writes or co @-@ writes her own records . Discussing the writing process of The Alesha Show she said , " I 've written the majority of it and I co @-@ write as well with a lot of people " . Critics have suggested some of her songs are autobiographical , such as " To Love Again " (2009) , co @-@ written with Gary Barlow and John Shanks . Vocally , reviewer Andy Gill of The Independent suggested that Dixon 's vocal strengths lie with more up @-@ tempo songs , saying " the problem is that her bubbly personality (and voice) is simply not as well suited to ballads as to perky dancefloor anthems " . However , The Guardian 's Caroline Sullivan complemented her live vocals whilst reviewing her tour , The Alesha Show . She said , of her concert tour , that " it was her singing that made the impression : she 's more powerful than you would imagine , and when pitted against her band at their most blaring , she more than held her own . While this was going on , she was being flung between two male hoofers , proving , if nothing else , that pop stars who claim they can 't dance and sing simultaneously just aren 't trying " .

= = = Influences = = =

Dixon has often cited Madonna as an influence , saying " Madonna is a big idol . I loved her when I was a young girl and I feel like I 've been on a musical journey with her " . Dixon 's single " Let 's Get Excited " namechecked the singer and her 1985 single " Into the Groove " . Furthermore , the music video featured what Dixon described as " a Madonna tribute " featuring voguing throughout . Additionally , Dixon has described Kylie Minogue as her childhood idol . Growing up , the first record Dixon ever bought was " Push It " by the hip hop group Salt @-@ n @-@ Pepa ; she remarked " I didn 't understand what they were talking about at the time ... They were raw and did their own thing , and I loved that . I love artists who don 't conform to what people expect of them " .

Despite growing up in the predominantly white area of Welwyn Garden City , Hertfordshire , Dixon 's father Melvin would take her to the Notting Hill Carnival in London to allow her to experience some of her Jamaican heritage . The music she would hear influenced her tastes , as she commented : " all the dancehall records I saved up to buy ? Shabba Ranks , Buju Banton ? I heard them at Notting Hill " . When asked during an interview who her favourite songwriter was , Dixon replied : " Lauryn Hill . I love Lauryn Hill because she is not scared to talk about real life . She may say things that are slightly controversial but she gets people thinking and gets people talking " . Dixon has also named Neneh Cherry as great influence upon her . Cherry , a mixed race singer , inspired her from an early age , with Dixon saying , " I remember seeing Neneh Cherry on the TV when I was little and turning to my mum and saying , ' Mummy , she looks like me ' " .

= = Philanthropy = =

Dixon has described herself and other celebrities as having a " moral responsibility " to do good works , when asked by The Observer 's Elizabeth Day . Speaking in August 2010 to Blues & Soul Dixon said : " Being in the entertainment industry I do feel I have a responsibility that comes with my fame " .

In 2009 , Dixon climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania for Comic Relief with Girls Aloud members Cheryl Cole and Kimberley Walsh , Ben Shephard , Ronan Keating , Fearne Cotton , Denise Van Outen , Chris Moyles and Gary Barlow , who had spearheaded the project . Together they raised over £ 3 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 towards helping combat malaria in Tanzania . In June 2009 Dixon became an official ambassador for the charity Help a London Child , stating that she felt " very honoured " to be asked .

Dixon is a patron of the African @-@ Caribbean Leukaemia Trust (ACLT) which is a voluntary charity , whose main aim is to increase the number of Black and Mixed Parentage people on the UK Bone Marrow Register . The members of the ACLT freely volunteer their time in attempting to raise awareness in the Black community ; enabling potential donors to come forward and be involved in the process of offering hope and a healthy future to someone whose disorder may otherwise prove fatal . Dixon has also backed Nickelodeon 's See Something , Say Something campaign , a UK anti @-@ bullying initiative .

Dixon is engaged with various animal rights organisations and is also a vegetarian . She is Vice @-@ President of the League Against Cruel Sports , a charity which works to end cruelty to animals in the name of sport and featured in a charity appeal due to concerns that the Hunting Act 2004 could be repealed . In 2012 , Dixon travelled to Romania with World Animal Protection to rescue two brown bears from Onesti Zoo , which had closed years previously . The bears were moved to a nearby sanctuary . In 2014 , Dixon encouraged her Twitter followers to sign an online petition calling for the ban of slaughtering animals without being stunned first . UK and EU law requires that animals must be stunned before slaughter , unless for religious purposes (Halal or Kosher meat) . Dixon is also a supporter of the PetRetreat scheme launched by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) . The scheme fosters pets belonging to victims of domestic abuse , who often have to leave behind animals , as many refuges and safe houses do not allow pets . The pets are later reunited with their original owners when possible .

In addition to Dixon 's commercial role as a model and representative for the cosmetics company Avon on International Women 's Day 2012 , Dixon launched the company 's Pass It On campaign to highlight domestic abuse issues in the UK by encouraging the purchase of a necklace , described by her as " a symbol of women 's empowerment , and infinite possibilities for women " . All the proceeds from Avon 's necklace campaign were donated to Refuge and Women 's Aid . In March 2013 Dixon led a walk down Westminster Bridge to the Houses of Parliament to raise awareness of domestic violence . Regarding the walk , Dixon commented that " awareness of domestic violence is still shockingly low and that 's why it 's so important that we raise awareness about a subject that is too often ignored " .

= = Other ventures = =

As well as a singer , Dixon has forayed into television presenting , created three documentaries , and has established herself as a businesswoman through various endorsement deals and lucrative contracts . In November 2009 , Dixon announced the release of her jewellery line . Dixon has signed deals with various brands , including car manufacturers Ford , chocolate brand Toblerone , cosmetics company Avon and airline Thomson Airways . Additionally , Dixon is creative director of gym chain LA Fitness , a role which she assumed in 2009 . Dixon signed a four @-@ year results @-@ based deal with the gym chain , with her remuneration based on the success of the company .

= = = Presenting = = =

Dixon has presented shows in the UK , such as the MOBO Awards , CD : UK , ITV2 's coverage of

The Brit Awards and presented the Live From the Red Carpet show at the 62nd British Academy Film Awards for E ! . She has also been a guest on BBC One 's current affairs programme This Week on two occasions , in November 2006 and December 2007 . In 2008 , Dixon presented her own mini @-@ documentary entitled Alesha : Look But Don 't Touch , which aired on the BBC and featured a guest appearance from Cheryl Cole . The show explored " improvement " by digital technology in order to understand the impact all these " perfect " images have on society . In 2009 , it was reported that Dixon was in talks with television companies about a possible chatshow . In 2008 and 2009 , she co @-@ presented Children in Need with Terry Wogan and Tess Daly . She returned to present the telethon in 2011 with Daly , Wogan and Fearne Cotton .

In March 2010 , Dixon presented the Mister World 2010 pageant in Incheon , Korea .

Since 22 August 2011 , Dixon presented a street @-@ dance competition for CBBC called Alesha 's Street Dance Stars . She has also appeared in the CBBC series 12 Again . On 17 May 2013 , Dixon was a guest presenter on ITV Breakfast magazine show Lorraine .

In the summer of 2013 , Dixon and Paddy McGuinness co @-@ presented one series the ITV reality show Your Face Sounds Familiar .

In 2014 and 2015 , Dixon co @-@ presented segments of ITV 's Text Santa telethon . In 2016 , she co @-@ presented Sport Relief 2016 on BBC One with Greg James .

= = Discography = =

2006 : Fired Up

2008 : The Alesha Show

2010 : The Entertainer

2015 : Do It for Love

= = Tours = =

= = Awards and nominations = =