

**BORN:**

06/09/81

**IN:**

London, U.K.

**IS:**

Musician

**WEARS:**

knicker and shorts  
by **Adriano Panatone**  
short by **Proble** boots  
by **El Negro** and  
sneakers by **Falke**



# Patrick wolf



Although Patrick Wolf has spent his career redefining himself, he doesn't much care what you call him. Sure, the singer and composer thinks a lot about where he wants to be and how he wants his music to change, but dwelling on what to call himself holds no appeal. "I used to hear all those words—prodigy, wanderkind—when I was eighteen, nineteen and twenty," he says. "I played a festival on Sunday, and they were calling me a veteran! Eight years from prodigy to veteran, I don't really see much difference in the names."

But Wolf, originally called Patrick Denis Apps, has done a lot of growing up since his 2003 debut, *Lambology*. He's fallen in and out and back into love, and explored musical styles from Celtic folk to classical, pop and electronica. Even the cover of his latest album, *The Bachelor*, references the *Lambology* cover, symbolizing how he's changed from innocent romantic to battle-hardened artist. *The Bachelor*'s wistful, pulsing closer "The Messenger" spells out his journey. Wolf remembers starting the song over a decade ago, taking his first laptop out to a park in South London and singing a melody around his dreams of becoming a singer and traveling around the world. A self-confessed hoarder (during our talk Wolf found his birth certificate in the trash, his cleaning lady having thought it was another piece of junk), he found the song ten years later and wanted to update it. "It's important to understand that your natural human nature is about evolution. From the age of twenty to thirty you can be ten different types of people," he explains. "So the first half [of

"The Messenger"] is fifteen, and the second half is twenty-five looking back at all the excessive noise that I've done."

He still loves traveling (though at 6'4" he doesn't enjoy the flights)—his favorite trip recently was his tour across the American South, getting a Dolly Parton makeover, learning to eat crayfish properly and meeting fans from smaller towns. Two years ago at the Glastonbury Festival, Wolf was thrilled to hear the crowd sing along to his breakthrough second, *The Magic Jubilee*. He got the same thrill this year from hearing an Atlanta audience sing *The Bachelor* back to him. "That was really special," he says. "When I was bullied at school, I used music as my armor. It was my way of fighting through everyday. If I could give back a little of what music had given me as a teenager, then that would be the best I could do with my life."

Now Wolf wants to be the kind of artist he wanted to see at age 15—Grace Jones, Patti Smith, David Bowie—namely, the kind of artist he still wants to see, one who progresses long into their fifties (the halfway point, as Wolf expects to live to 100); less pop star, more pop icon, though the rewards are more subtle. "I had to do quite a bit of work in order to get myself to the point where I feel equal to the rest of the world." Though it's easy for him to look back—almost too easy, since he can see the hospital where he was born from his apartment window—Wolf is satisfied looking into his future. Long into his future. "Some people want to do the 100-meter sprint, some people want to do the cross-country march," he laughs. "I'm a long-distance runner." ★

BY JESSICA SUAREZ