

Spray it, don't say it

At 43, drum 'n' bass pioneer Goldie has followed David Bowie's advice to 'reinvent'. He talks to **Jessica Holland** about his graffiti art show, which hits London this weekend

What have you been up to today?

Oh God, creating a piece of music for the Albert Hall, for the Proms. They've asked me to compose a piece seven minutes long based on evolution. It's complicated, but interesting.

Your upcoming graffiti exhibition is called *The Kids Are All Riot*...

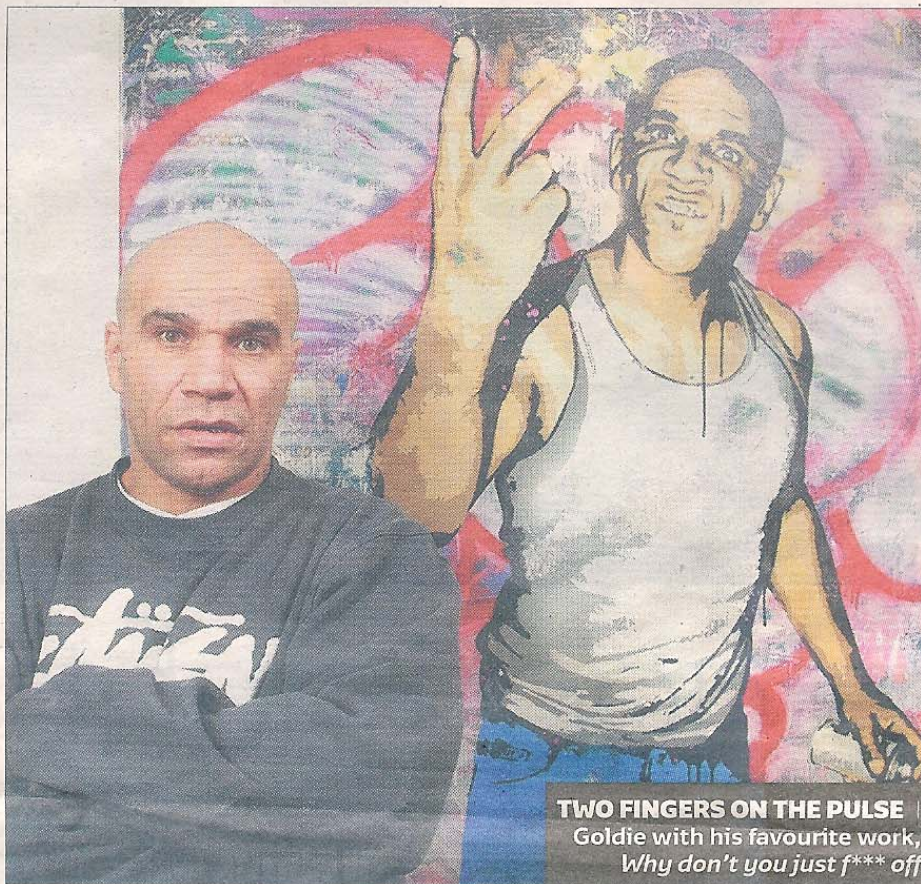
The common theme is youth culture. The kids aren't really OK. It reminds me of just before punk exploded or just before the 90s Brit music explosion. I think it's time for another change. There are so many young kids who turn to music because they can't turn to anything else. Kids today are frustrated because they have no way to express their talents.

Were the graffiti and music scenes a lifeline for you growing up?

Yeah, I had youth club workers and an art teacher who spent time after school helping me out. The local arts council funded my first exhibition at 18, because they were like: "Here's a kid doing lots of illegal graffiti, maybe we can make good of him." The Goldie music fame came later, by accident really. I was already known as an artist.

Is there a piece in the exhibition which means the most to you?

I think *Why don't you just*



TWO FINGERS ON THE PULSE
Goldie with his favourite work, *Why don't you just f*** off*

*f*** off* is probably my favourite. It's me holding an aerosol can, sticking my fingers in the air. That reminds me of being 18 - and the attitude I had then, I still have now. The way I feel about music and about art is as strong as the day I signed my record deal.

Is it hard to keep pushing yourself when you're rich and successful?

David Bowie said to me:

"Reinvention is one of the greatest gifts we've ever been given." And it is.

Wait, was that a spot of name-dropping?

Nah, many years ago I did a documentary, and [in it] he said: "No matter what you do, you're always going to want to reinvent, because you're an artist." I seriously took that on board. I want to keep doing things that are new.

Like reality TV? How did you get into that?

It's called paying for a divorce. Now I've paid, that's it. Actually, I had another reason for going on *Big Brother*. I used to be a kid in a children's home with 25 others who never knew who they were, so I thought it would be funny to see eight celebrities who all completely know who they are talk about how

they don't know who the f*** they are at all. I wanted to upset the apple cart. But learning to conduct [in reality show *Maestro*] was phenomenal. It's an amazing thing to do, and it taught me so much about how I make electronic music. And off the back of that, I'm doing this piece for the Proms. It's something my mother would really admire me doing.

You've got a new album in the pipeline. Does it signal a change of direction for you?

It's very underground - a lot of people on the circuit are playing it. Drum 'n' bass has become really commercial - it wasn't before. I've just gone more underground again. I can play it on a weekend and people say: "This is good, what is this?" and I tell them it's off my new album. It makes me feel I'm still pushing buttons.

You used to date supermodels and pop stars. Will your private view be packed with celebs?

Oh no, I don't care about that any more. I just care about people coming and seeing my work and saying: "The boy's done all right."

Goldie: *The Kids Are All Riot, The Maverik Showroom, Fri-26 Apr, 68 Redchurch St, E2, 020 7739 6002*