

# Clever, sometimes insecure – and brave

On the occasion of Greyson Michael Chance's fifteenth birthday  
on 16 August 2012

In an interview, Greyson Michael Chance was asked to describe himself in three words. His reply was 'I would say clever, sometimes insecure – and brave, yes brave'.

His cleverness is demonstrated by this choice, as there is hardly another triplet of words that would describe him better – an indication of his ability to size himself up. It is demonstrated, above all, by the way he took his life in his own hands at twelve and has since been steering through the dangers of show business; to perform at full throttle but also remain easygoing, never to take it all too seriously and thus always to remain on top – it is this, especially, that distinguishes him.

It is evident, however, that cleverness alone did not suffice to realize his goals. It is one thing to know what one wants and how to get it; it is another thing to do it. To leave home for Los Angeles, where the songs were written and recorded and the videos were produced, to work and live with strangers, certainly required more courage than most twelve-year-olds could muster – let alone do it of one's own free will.

It is also an indication of his cleverness, though initially surprising, that he did not choose three positive words, but one among the three that at first sight appears negative: insecure, though only sometimes. It takes a closer look to realize that this insecurity, too, has positive effects: if he were always feeling secure, like decisions in like situations would, at close inspection, soon result in predictability; there would hardly be surprises. Precisely this is not the case, however: his behaviour varies depending on the appearance or non-appearance of insecurity; it becomes unpredictable, and this, together with his many talents, accounts for his fascination. Though I have spent many hundreds of hours watching his videos I have never been bored, and neither, I think, has anyone else who knows him well enough.

I regard Greyson Michael as so complete an artist as to be already first-rate, but he also possesses a great deal of development potential that justifies anticipation of the future. For his sixteenth year, I wish Greyson Michael, apart from the realization of his other aims, a splendid continuation of his career, and I wish his fans, including myself, as much delight in him and his music as they have taken in the past. He lights up the dark.