



Apprentice ... Dan Sultan has recorded *Just Keep Walking* with INXS.

Robert Forster, these days seen more often as a music critic but in his prime an often flamboyant, smart and sexy frontman with the Go-Betweens, agrees with Lander that the small population could be a factor here.

"In Australia you get lift-off but it's precarious and can always come down, while rock stardom in the UK and America shoots you into outer

space and that's when you start strutting about and you lose your mind, walking 10 miles off the Earth," Forster says.

But there's also a cultural barrier. "In the UK, when they get a shot at the top, they live it large," Forster says. "They suddenly just go, 'Yes!' They become lord of the manor and they love it, while in Australia it seems to be, 'I'm so thankful, I will

keep to my roots.' There's something wedged in the Australian mind that I think doesn't allow someone to lift off out of that."

Forster, not a great fan of Hutchence, nominates Jim Keays of '60s band the Masters Apprentices and Marc Hunter, the frontman of Dragon for two decades, as examples of a home-grown rock stars with danger, sex appeal and front.

"Marc Hunter is the full deal: the strutting rooster, the glint in the eye, reckless, camp and selling a lot of records," he says. "Like Jim Keays, he had that bit of a smirk on the mouth, great clothes, great body, voice. A rock star.

"And the other thing about Marc Hunter is he enjoyed it. You could see that look on his face all the time and that is important."

Do we have any who might have a chance of being an Australian rock star? Abbe May is a dark horse in some quarters, while O'Donnell says he thinks Silverchair's Daniel Johns is the only artist in the past 10 or 15 years who has "that same sex and glamour appeal; that Hutchence thing, right down to the superstar girlfriends, wives in his life".

Forster agrees: "I wish he'd strut around a little bit more."

The other name that crops up is Dan Sultan - early in his career but already turning heads, including those of INXS, with whom he's recorded *Just Keep Walking* for the band's upcoming album.

Farriss says, "He might turn out to be the real thing," while *Rolling Stone's* Lander enthuses that "I haven't seen him perform but I have heard all the reports of girls standing there mesmerised".

"It's early days but I'm very impressed with the way he's managed to be on the verge of moving from ABC 702 to Triple J and then taking over the world," he says.

The question is, though, does Sultan want it? Does he want it the way Michael Hutchence really wanted it? And will we let him?

Listen to an exclusive preview of Dan Sultan singing *Just Keep Walking* at [smh.com.au](http://smh.com.au).

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