

NIGEL'S 11 CHRIS KIRKPATRICK

BY HEATHER LAUDE PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS KNIGHT

In the mid-1990s, Orlando was a hotbed for successful bands. Groups like *NSync, O-Town and Backstreet Boys started out of Orlando and enjoyed years of success. Now, years after the end of the boy band era, Chris Kirkpatrick, one of the members of *NSync, is hoping his new band, Nigel's 11, can achieve similar success.

Kirkpatrick is certainly no stranger to the mainstream music scene. He was the countertenor in *NSync and was also instrumental in the formation of the group in Orlando in 1995. Comprised of Kirkpatrick, Justin Timberlake, JC Chasez, Joey Fatone and Lance Bass, *NSync sold over 56 million records worldwide and was a staple in the boy band phenomenon of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Two of the band's albums reached diamond status and their second album, *No Strings Attached*, holds the record for the most sales on the first day and week of an album's release.

Now almost seven years since *NSync announced its hiatus, Kirkpatrick is the lead singer for Nigel's 11 and is taking on roles he never imagined he would.

"I felt very much a part of *NSync. Everybody had a role - Justin and JC had the leads and I did a lot of background because I have that voice," Kirkpatrick said. "Now it's much different. It's a completely new thing for me to work toward and have to learn."

Nigel's 11, comprised of Kirkpatrick as the lead vocalist, Mike Bosch on guitar, Dave Carreiro on bass and Ernie Longoria on Drums, has recorded its first album which is in the final stages of mixing. The band is currently unsigned but has recently started working with famed music manager Johnny Wright who managed New Kids on the Block, Janet Jackson, Justin Timberlake and numerous other successful artists.

Nigel's 11 is a rock-pop band influenced by 70s and 80s groups like ELO, Queen and Boston. The band officially came together in 2007 but didn't start actively working toward an album until 2009.

"It's been two years of guys coming and going," Kirkpatrick says. "Other projects came up but in the last four months we really started focusing."

After *NSync announced a temporary hiatus - one that is yet to be lifted - Kirkpatrick admits he initially partied a lot. "In my head, I stayed there - like *NSync was still going strong. There hadn't been time for that with *NSync's schedule, so I partied like I couldn't before," he said. "It really got bad for awhile with me overindulging."

Once it all wore off, Kirkpatrick got involved with television - first, he lent his voice to the Nickelodeon cartoon, "The Fairly OddParents" for the show's teen idol character, Chip Skylark. Kirkpatrick said he really enjoys doing voice-overs. "They're fun because you get to pretend like you're somebody else for a day," he said.



CHRIS KIRKPATRICK

After that, Kirkpatrick was a cast member on VH1's Mission: Man Band in 2007 and the second season of Gone Country on CMT in 2008.

"I got to meet some really cool people," Kirkpatrick said of his Gone Country experience. "I got to clown around with people like Jermaine Jackson and Mikalah Gordon and did crazy stuff like roping horses. The overall experience was cool – I also got to sit down with a country writer and write a country song – that was very interesting."

Even through all of his musical and television endeavors, Kirkpatrick has called Orlando home. He's been in the city for over 20 years and his mother and sister have also moved to Orlando from Pennsylvania. "Orlando's a nice place to be from," Kirkpatrick said. "I could never see myself leaving."

Kirkpatrick has kept his local ties strong in a few ways, including his weekly appearances every Friday on XL 106.7's morning show with Johnny & Jayde. "I give my two cents and they listen to my stupid stories," Kirkpatrick says of the XL show. "I get to make fun of myself and other people."

In addition to radio, Kirkpatrick also started his own non-profit organization, the Chris Kirkpatrick Foundation. After working with the Children's Home Society of Florida, Kirkpatrick was inspired to start his own organization in an effort to make a difference in the lives of underprivileged children in Central Florida. Their biggest event is for Halloween. They take kids from the Children's Home Society and other shelters and provide them with Halloween costumes and everything that goes with them: haunted houses, trick-or-treating and hayrides.

"We want to give the kids that normal lifestyle so for at least a day, they don't feel like an orphan. For that day, they get to feel like a normal kid," Kirkpatrick said.

Similar to his commitment to community service, Kirkpatrick also has a grounded approach when it comes to Nigel's 11 fans. He says the band's main philosophy is to work hard, stay grounded and remember who supports them. Even though the band's unsigned, they're working hard to build a fan base early through MySpace, internet showcases, and a Street Team – a group of fans who work to promote the band.

"I know where *NSync came from – it was from the fans. I've always been one who wanted to support the people who love the music and buy the albums. You just have to stay grounded and remember that they made it happen."

The band is doing all of its own legwork when it comes to their album and promotions, which is much different from Kirkpatrick's experience with *NSync.

"It's really overwhelming because the band doesn't have a record label saying, 'You're going to record this tomorrow, then you have a week off to write.' With *NSync, it was all planned for us," Kirkpatrick said. "Now, we're doing everything on our own which makes it more difficult. There are a lot of steps that I didn't realize were there before."

After a live showcase in Orlando in July, Kirkpatrick said Nigel's 11 hopes to be signed to a record label.

"We're working toward getting this record out soon," he said. "We look forward to getting back out there and making music again."



Just the Facts:

1. **First Album you ever owned?** Kenny Rogers - The Gambler
2. **Favorite Career Moment?** I've had so many, but I'd probably have to say performing in the Super Bowl Half Time Show or the 2001 Rock In Rio show in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
3. **Do you remember where you were the first time you heard yourself on the radio?** It was me, Justin and JC and we were in JC's Jeep. Our song came on and we opened up the doors and we were cranking it! It was awesome.
4. **If you weren't singing, what would you be doing?** I would probably be a roadie on a tour.
5. **Craziest Fan Story?** We got chased in Germany by all these girls that would not stop. They chased us in the airport and they were riding the checked luggage belts. We just kept running and jumping through bushes – it was crazy! I feared for my life.
6. **What's your favorite local hangout?** There's so many good ones – Vintage – Rock Room, Corona's downtown there's a lot of spots. Bar Louie
7. **What's something people are surprised to find out about you?** Maybe it's not that surprising, but I play a ton of video games. I like racing games, golf games – a lot of different kinds!