

## Jack Savoretti Interview Teacher's Notes

B1

B2

This wide-ranging interview with Anglo-Italian singer-songwriter Jack Savoretti is a rich resource for listening comprehension and for discussion. We've broken it into three parts varying in theme and difficulty about multicultural schooling, the music industry, and how a Bob Dylan song changed his life.

### Vocabulary and structures

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- Comparisons
- School
- Intercultural understanding
- Music
- World of work
- Emotions

### Notions culturelles

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- *l'Art du vivre ensemble*
- *Sentiment d'appartenance*
- *Espaces et échanges*
- *Parcours de l'avenir*
- *Culture et création artistique*

### Listening

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- The extracts can be used together or separately.
- "School" includes comparisons of European and American schooling, and the challenges and rewards of being schooled with people from many different backgrounds at an international school. It would work well with *l'Art du vivre ensemble*, *Sentiment d'appartenance* or *Espaces et échanges*.
- "Career" starts out with some facts about Savoretti's career and includes the difficulties he faced and his thoughts about the fickle nature of artistic success. It would fit well into a theme on working life or *culture et création artistique*.
- "Dylan" contains a factual part, about how

he came to discover and record an obscure Bob Dylan song, but also a powerful statement of the impact a song can have on a person.

### Transcript

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#### School 1'47" B1-B1+

*Yes, my father's job moved him to Switzerland, and we moved there, the south of Switzerland. And I went to an American school there. So I had this very... I had the luxury of growing up in Europe with American sort of upbringing, in a weird way, which was kind of cool because it was very open-minded. Far more open-minded than the European education I had been used to, which was very academic and I was not very academic. You were kind of academic or you were an idiot sort of thing, they kind of brushed you aside. Whereas in the American system, at least the school I went to, they were very keen on trying to figure out, "Well, what do you like to do? What can you do?" And that was kind of where I found my interest in poetry, first, and then music, and art in general, and just looking at things differently. Looking for the beauty in things even if it's horrible to see at the beginning. Trying to take a bit longer to see situations.*

*It was a very multi-cultural school so that as well kind of created... it taught you how to be patient with people because what*

you first might... your first impression of someone or what someone is saying or how they're saying it is very often not accurate, and it's just purely the cultural differences. Yeah, at the beginning it's scary, it's weird. "Why do you do it like that?... Why do you eat like that? Why do you talk like that? Why do you dress like that?" You know, we have different smells, sounds, opinions. With time, you start to realise that. "Oh, maybe I should wait before having an opinion because just because he says that differently doesn't mean he's saying what I think he's saying."

## Career 1'45" B2

This is my fifth album. I started when I was about 21. And it hasn't been easy. It started quite well and then I didn't really see eye to eye with the people I was working with, so, finished that. To be honest, after my second album, I thought, "That's it, I want nothing to do with this. This is vile. But then I realised that it was a bit silly to walk away from the thing I love doing the most, simply because the industry that provides it is vile. And I'm like, I'm sure it's not all like that, there must be good people in this industry, there's some great music and stuff like that.

So I decided to start from scratch and choosing people for who they were as people, rather than their credentials. And that made a very big difference, I found. So I wanted to make sure that the people I worked with were of a certain philosophy and mentality, and that allowed us to... it was hard work but it allowed us to sort of go the way we wanted to go. Which meant that we were going to have to work a lot harder, and we've had to, and at least now we know where everything comes from, we know how every album was made.

And I think that sometimes people have success in the music industry by pure coincidence, but they believe that it's because of their greatness. Because it's not very tangible, success in this industry. You can never really explain it. It's not because... there is no formula. It's purely sometimes yes and sometimes no, kind of thing, and I think that creates for interesting characters. An industry that's based on something as volatile as taste, or as fashion or as trend. Something so quick as that creates for an interesting group of people.

## Dylan 1'25" B1-B1+

I was making an album, my second album, called Harder Than Easy, in a studio in Santa Monica owned by Jackson Browne. There was all this stuff in there, this box that said "Bob" on it. Anyway, there was this junk and it belonged to Mr Bob Dylan. And the guy I was working with there, he said, "You've got to listen to this song Dylan never released." It was a recording that a student at Cambridge University I believe, if I remember, had recorded. And it was when Dylan was touring around the UK with his guitar, and he was so prolific that apparently he was sort of trying out all these songs every night at the shows and seeing what worked and what didn't. And this was a song called, "Nobody 'Cept You"... But he never recorded it. He never did it properly.

But anyway, I say the song saved my life, because it did. It kind of slapped me around the face when I needed slapping in the face, and reminded me of what was important. So I'm very grateful to the song.

## How did it slap you around the face?

Well it just made me realise the importance of a particular person, something not to

*take for granted. When you find somebody like that. And when you hear it in a song like that, and you realise in a song how rare, or how mystical, it is to find somebody who makes you feel that certain way, then it might be worth fighting for and not just taking it for granted basically.*