

This week...
Tricity Vogue!

*Every week we ask one of the
people who have helped
make Cabaret vs Cancer a
success the same ten
questions...*

1. Who are you and what do you do?

I'm a cabaret performer, a writer, a singer songwriter and a ukulele player. I've been performing as Tricity Vogue since 2004, which makes me 12 years old. I've written a drag action musical called Heels of Glory which headlined the Pride in London festival in 2016 with a star-studded cast, and a novel which only two other people have read so far.

2. Can you list three people who are your inspiration, and why?

Dennis Potter is responsible for my fascination with vintage cabaret, and mischievous storytelling methods, because I watched The Singing Detective on the telly at a dangerously formative age.

Anita Loos is the 1920s Hollywood screenwriter who wrote Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, my favourite book and film. She wrote silent movie scenarios and then scripts for wisecracking women in the early movie days before the clampdown on feisty females in front of and behind the camera. She was tiny, but resilient, and always immaculately dressed.

Penny Arcade blew my mind when I saw her show Bitch Dyke Fag Hag Whore at the Edinburgh Festival in 1994, and blew my mind all over again when I saw it 20 years later. She helped me understand why I didn't fit into the straight world around me, and how I could fit into the queer world where I felt I belonged, even if I happened to like going to bed with the opposite sex.

3. What would you save from your burning house?*(people, pets, legal documents and computers are already saved!)

At least one ukulele, although I'd have a tough choice deciding which one to grab - I'd probably go for my 1940s Favila because anything that looks and sounds that good at 70 deserves to stick around as long as possible.

I'd be devastated to see my wardrobe go up in flames, but it would be a nightmare choosing which gown to grab. Maybe my first ever Tricity Vogue gown, made for me bespoke by a designer called Stephane St Jaymes, an ex drag queen who helped me create my character at the same time as the frock. It's turquoise chinese brocade with red fringes and a split up the side. Maybe the shock of the house fire would make me lose some weight so I could get into it again.

4. What's your favourite meal and what drink is it washed down with?

I love food. Tonight my Sri Lankan friend Dinarzarde has cooked us a spectacular curry banquet featuring spices from Sri Lanka and Tooting, which has wiped all other tastes from my mind. We washed it down with white wine which is not traditional but worked perfectly.

5. What talent do you wish you had?

I wish I could play the piano

6. Where is your favourite place?

Inside a really good story. If forced to put the book down and be somewhere in the real world, I would be in Branscombe, Devon, walking along the cliff path with my fiancé and a backpack stuffed with picnic food, books, a rug and a flask of tea, on our way to the beach.

7. What do you do to relax?

I love reading. I gorge on genre fiction as if it's junk food. Fantasy and detective fiction are my two favourite trash reading choices. Reading a book on the beach in the sunshine is the best. Reading a book in bed will do just fine as well.

8. What book do you recommend everyone reads?

Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City. I read the first three in the series at the age of 21, and felt like I'd found my own alternative family in a story for the first time. Anyone who fails to see their own clan of oddballs and misfits in mainstream fiction or television will find a warm welcome at 28 Barbary Lane

9. What is your biggest regret?

When Robert LePage was sitting with his cast mates in a pub where I was performing I didn't go and talk to him to tell him I thought the theatre he made was incredible because I was too embarrassed.

Also, when I was in New York in 1997 I didn't go up the Twin Towers because I couldn't be bothered to queue. I said I'd come back and do it another time instead.

10. If God existed, what would you like to hear him say to you at the pearly gates?

The library's that way. If you can't find a book you fancy reading, just ask our librarian Jane Austen for her recommendations. And the reading room has a hammock in it for you already.

Finally, do you have anything to plug I'm doing my absolute Gig Of The Year at Wilton's Music Hall in London with my All Girl Swing Band on Friday 26 August. We'll be a nine-piece, including a three-part horn section, and tap dancer Josephine Shaker.
<http://wiltons.org.uk/whatson/241-tricity-vogue-s-all-girl-swing-band>