



Welcome to the Land of Oz! **with Stacey Christie and Kitty**

I hadn't been out much over the past few months. It's been very odd though how things turn around and arrive so quickly, before you've even got time to grab your breath.

Here in Birmingham we have a fantastic couple on BBC WM radio. Tony and Julie. They host a late night show, with a wide variety of topics for debate. I have contributed to many regarding cross-dressing in public, make-up for men, skirts for football players etc etc. The plan was to go in and give a review of a show. Just for clarity, the theatre didn't know who I was, and I had bought my own ticket – a mystery shopper if you like. Little did I know how the evening would progress.

I was off to a performance of 'Wizard Of Oz' at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre. This performance was a 'Sing-A-Long' with a live cast (unlike the film version also doing the rounds) and theatre goers dressed as the characters from the story. I went dressed as Dorothy (Who else would I go as?) and Kitty-my long suffering wife-went as Glinda.

So we are sitting in the café with our respective basket/dog \$300 ruby slippers and wand combinations waiting for the doors to open. Inside I was decidedly on edge as unlike other things that are "dressy uppy", shows such as Rocky Horror or Blues Brothers, with less than half an hour till curtain up Kitty and I were the only ones dressed up! D'OH!

May be I'd got the wrong date? No- there were song sheets in the programs. Oh crikey. Kitty said she was embarrassed, I reminded her that at least she was a girly dressed as a girly..... Joy of joys! A crowd of people dressed as trees, tin men, lions, flying monkeys, evil witches, and even a yellow brick road came in. Suddenly we felt a lot less nervous. The show started and we sang our little hearts out. It was so cool, the show had everything. The actors costumes were all black and white at both the beginning and ending of the show. There was even 'The Jitterbug' song that had been left out of the original movie. I was in heaven. All too quickly the show was over – But Wait! An announcement? The artistic director grabbed a microphone. He announced that they had decided to have a competition. Best dressed adult, and best dressed youngster. The young girl had to come down from the very back of the auditorium – ah bless her, dressed as a munchkin. He then said 'I'll narrow down the adults to a Dorothy' – 'A Dorothy on the fourth row', He then shielded his eyes from the glare of the spot light, and pointed directly at me! Oh My God!!!!!!

As I made my way to the stage to collect my prize my head was in a twirl. I couldn't believe, I'd been picked out. I shook all the characters hands and picked up my prize from Dorothy who was 4"10, a whole foot shorter than myself. I'd won a bottle of champagne, and two tickets to any show I liked. Kitty grabbed the camera and took a few snaps. I wasn't allowed to leave the stage till I performed one vital task. I had to click my heels together three times 'There's No Place like home', 'There's No Place like home', 'There's No Place like home'. In the foyer many people wanted to have their picture taken with Kitty and myself. I was so proud to have won. We then went off to BBC studios in Pebble Mill to give a review of what had happened. I could hardly have contained my excitement. I was met at security, and given a nice badge to wear. Tony & Julie were on the final hour of their show. I gave them all the gossip, and Julie plonked me in front of the studios web cam so listeners could see us as well. I can honestly say that it was one of the best nights out I have ever had. It was such a laugh, in fact I'm still giggling to my self as I'm writing this. 'Somewhere over the rainbow.....!' staceychristie@blueyonder.co.uk



BLACKPOOL **with Miss Sarah Lloyd**

Blackpool is the UK's Las Vegas and a great place for a summer break. It has a special treat waiting for you. 'Funny Girls' is now based in the old Odeon cinema in Dicken's St.

Owner Basil Newby has kept a lot of the art deco features outside and in, which makes a stunning background for the bar which is situated in front of the stage. Prices for drinks here are so cheap that £20 will get you happily slaughtered. There are stunning drag and tranny girls serving from behind the bar (quick hello to Noxi and Topaz). Long time drag DJ, and show stopper, Zoe presides over the whole evening. (Quick tip - to avoid her acid tongue, her tippie is white wine and by the way - pull out the stops on sparkle and bling bling).

The Funny Girls show is overseen by the Miss Betty Legs Diamond whose talent is unsurpassable. Over a total of 10 years, this coming July, Betty continually strives for perfection in every dance step, every look. I asked her what has been her Fav role - to which she replied "Miss Flammchen from Grand Hotel, the finale for the new show". She would also like to tackle Norma Desmond from Sunset Boulevard. Betty is backed by the glamorous Amber and Jade and a troupe of dancers that she puts through a rigorous rehearsal two days per week. I've seen some fab routines at Funny Girls. On my favs are 'Riverdance' and 'Our favourite son' which will be featured in their 10th Anniversary show this year.

Your port of call should be their sister venue in Queen St, 'Roxys'. With a burlesque theme, this fab venue is a favourite haunt of regulars who want more cabaret. Thursday night was hosted by drag DJ 'Brandy Babycham' with a good cabaret from 'Rose Kelly'. This venue is open till 2am.

Near by is 'Mardis Gras' is a fun pub with regular cabaret. It is managed by long time starlet & showgirl 'Eva', who was one of the original Funny Girls and has one of the best boob jobs i've ever seen. It was a charm to catch up and find out all the gossip. Look out for 'Miss Stella Airtours' who I had the pleasure to see on stage. She has a fab voice. For further Drinking time 'Pepes' is very friendly and just around the corner. Further up the road is 'The Flying Handbag' and 'The Flamingo' night club where all the girls from behind the bars chill out (and are recruited from).

Shopping never ceases to amaze me in Blackpool. Its full of cut price bargains and charity shops. I always come home with a few bargains. Opposite Funny Girls I found a new shoe shop called 'Stiletos 2 die 4' selling Fredericks style shoes at very good prices.

Everything in Blackpool is just a short walk a way. I stayed at the **Lynmare Hotel** which is £16 and the fare from London Euston was £30 (bought two weeks in advance). Word of warning the journey back took 6hrs through delays so stock up with food and drinks before going to the station. So girls if you can't afford Las Vegas this year I highly recommend Blackpool.

The new 12th Tranny Guide has many 'Personal Reports' like this one from all around the world.

Pictures with thanks to Funny Girls and Miss Sarah Lloyd





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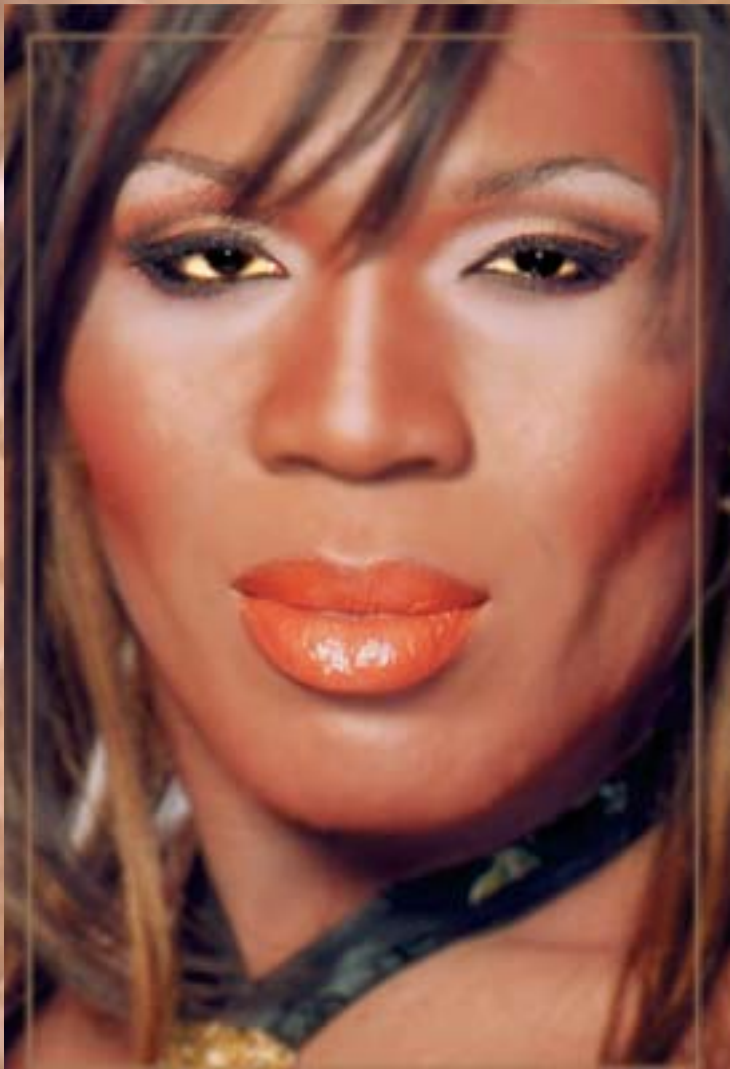


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By Pandora De Pledge



Since then I have never looked back and carried on going to Soho. This is where I met with Jean Michel and we became friends. I had just left my parents house and was ready to face the world by myself. Very quickly Jean Michel and I moved in together. It's him who introduced me to the glamorous world of Drag Queens and extravagant make-up and glitzy dresses. The first time I put on a dress we went to the WayOut Club and I entered my first talent competition and won which was a fabulous experience.

From there I went on to work in places such as Freedom Bar in Wardour street with Miss Kimberly, at Madam JoJo's with the exquisite Kitty Cartier, Heaven nightclub where I got to meet the wonderful D'arcy. These jobs opened up the door for me to work in films such as "Lucky Break", music videos with 'Innecity' and programmes like '24 hours in Soho' on ITV. Since joining this industry I have got to meet a lot of people with whom I have stayed friends (as well as those that I have parted with).

At the moment I am a regular performer at the WayOut Club, which is run by the one and only Vicky Lee and Steffan Whitfield, who I have always looked up to, and who gave me my first chance to perform before anybody else offered me anything on stage. I have learned a lot from Steffan and I am still learning, she is a true Diva.

I also belong to the 'House of Drag Agency' www.houseofdrag.tv run by Steffan. Through the agency I have been able to work in places such as the club 'Trade' (as 'Grace Jones') and television programs such as 'The 100 worst singles' (as 'Scary Spice').

I feel very lucky to do what I do at the moment. Apart from drag, I study fashion at the 'London College of Fashion' and I do a lot of freelance styling work. I believe in being honest and respectful to other people and always staying true to myself.

And finally to "son altesse royale" Madame Pandora De Pledge thank you for choosing me to feature in this magazine it has been a pleasure and a moment that I will always cherish.

Love always **Matiane.**

I arrived in London 11 years ago at the tender age of 15. I then lived in Great Portland Street with my mother and father with my four brothers and my sister. At the time I was pretty naive as a person and very insecure with myself as I was carrying extra weight. Looking back now I think It was the fact that I had a mother, who after 10 children, was still a size 10 and always looked FABULOUS.

For her, in every thing, image, was important and unfortunately she passed on that gene, of always trying to look your best, to me.

My first few years in London were pretty serene. I had a normal, very quiet life - until one day when I found myself in Soho. I will never forget what I saw that night. Muscle Marys, tiny skinny bitchy and bitter queens. (As, I now know, everyone on the scene calls them - but I didn't know what to call them at the time). And then DRAG QUEENS.

Make-up & Hair - Pandora De Pledge, Styling - Steffan Whitfield, Model - Miss Matiane, Photography - Bob Tanner for Image Works, Graphics - Titch for Image Works, Wigs & Make-up - Image Works Shop, Invaluable help & support - Rob Smith



Matiane

