Interviewer: When did you first hear about drag and what was your initial reaction to it?

Bijou: Um the first time I heard about drag was, I think, kind of similar to a lot of people from my generation, through Ru Paul’s Drag Race. Um, I always had like a lot of big love for everything that had to do with makeup and fashion and kind of like styling and creating. And I always tried to find a medium in which I can combine everything, and when I saw Drag Race for the first time I was like duh, like that makes sense. And I, uh, kind of got into the idea of starting it but I was like way too young back then. Like, I was, I don’t know, like 15, 16 when I saw the first season. So like I was way too young to like even think about doing it and like the older I got and like the more I really got also professionally into like doing makeup and doing um creating like like looks and outfits, um I was like okay now is the time to like actually start doing it so I started doing it in 2019 and like February 2019 and um that was kind of like the start of my Drag career, if you will. And, um, I just got into it by like trying to look for a medium I can combine everything then, seeing that drag, like exists because we don't really have a lot of drag queens in Germany. At least I didn't know a lot when I was younger. We had like two very, like, famous drag queens, kind of, but they did not represent a kind of art that I would want to make, because they kind of decided to be like the butt of the joke, in a sense. Which I never would like to be because I kind of like take what I do very, very seriously. Um, so when I saw that there other performers or other artists like just, that like represent something that I would like to make, like especially when I saw Violet Chachki which for the first time realizing that kind of the vintage aesthetic and something more classical is also combinable with doing drag, that was when I really got into the idea of really doing it.

Interviewer: So when you got into it in 2019, was that when you started performing as a drag artist, or?

Bijou: Yeah, so I, beforehand I like tried out stuff. I got like my first wig styles, I tried on a lot of different makeup looks, I tried to like perfect a lot of things, I got, um, a costume made, and in, I'm thinking the second of February 2019, I performed at the party of a friend. He was like if you really want to try out if you're good at this, do it somewhere where you're surrounded with friends and people you know, because even if you fuck up they will just laugh about it and its, its okay. And, um, that's what I did, and in that specific moment I knew okay, like I might have started something that I cannot stop anytime soon, and um that's when I really started performing. And then I send out applications for, um, performances, and um, I got some small ones at like smaller parties, then I got my first big, um, performance. I was booked for my first big performance in front of like I think 600 people, yeah, which was like "Oh shit," and um, and a vintage party here where I live in Cologne, and um that was when I like really knew, okay, like I wanna do this like, big time, like in front of bigger audiences and like really come up with performances that people will be left with, kind of like a feeling of "Oh that was great."

Interviewer: So, how did your family, friends, and um, other loved ones receive you becoming a drag artist?

Bijou: I'm very lucky and I'm very privileged in the sense that I always grew up in an environment that like always took me exactly as I am. Um, I am very-I always was very extraverted and was always someone that like loved to create, um, so like going into art, and going into doing makeup, and going into um, like having a huge interest for fashion, like that kind of for most of the people surrounding me was not a huge surprise. When I came out as gay, like that was also like fully okay for everyone, I think there was literally no one in my closest surrounding that I also care about, um, that had an issue with it. Um, especially my parents, like got very protective over me, being like, like "we fully support you and we want to make sure that you're always good. Like, if there's somebody who makes, like gives you a hard time, always tell us and we will find a way to like get rid of any problems." Um, that sounded very wrong [laughing], not get rid of any problems but [inaudible].

Interviewer: [Laughing] No-

Bijou: Like, like you know, going with me to that person and being like "Okay, like that's not okay." Um, I think my mom when I told her I was doing drag, she just was very afraid of society judging me in a way that is not fair to me. Um, because she knows that there's still a lot of people especially in Germany, because there is not a real drag scene, or like a huge drag scene where everybody kind of knows it exists and people are used to seeing it, that I will be judged heavily, especially in my day job. Um, so she was kind of like a little bit "Oh, oh okay." My dad was fully fine with it. He was like "Do whatever you want to do." Um, he was like "if I have to drive you anywhere, tell me. If you need props that I can like build you or anything, like tell me." And my mom just, then like, in the beginning, just kind of like a little bit anxious. Like how will people receive it? Also she was just very interested in seeing how I do drag. So at the beginning she was like very observant of like what I'm doing, and after some time when she saw what I was doing and when she saw like what my kind of style is, she immediately was hooked on it and now she's like one of my biggest fans. And same with friends, like everybody was just like that makes fully sense that you do this. They were like "that makes sense okay, I mean yeah." Now, their like, my best friend is my assistant. She drives with me anywhere, like everywhere where I could need some assistances, she's with me. And my first big performance that I told you about, I had at least like 10, I think 10 or 12 of my very close friends in the audience. They all bought a ticket to the party, and some of them I didn't even know that they did. So I got on stage and I, they like literally started like "wooooo!" I was like looking in the corner, be like "Wh-where are you coming from?"

Interviewer: [Laughing]

Bijou: And like, it just made me feel so at home in a sense. I was immediately less nervous because I knew that like, and I could also focus on them a lot.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Bijou: Like I was looking over the audience and I could focus on their corner a little bit more, so that like really calmed me down. So like, everybody is like receiving it very well. In my day job, I work in public administration, as a day job. Which is definitely more conservative, but even there, some people just like, I mean some people find it a little bit awkward, but they would never, like, tell me. They're like "Yeah that's not for me, like I don't want to talk to you about this." I'm just like that's fully fine, like you don't have to, like I don't care for some of your hobbies that you have as well [laughing]

Interviewer: [laughing]

Bijou: So that's fine. Um, but it was also surprisingly well received especially because I work for the administration of the police. And I was like, that could become an issue,

Interviewer: [laughing]

Bijou: But, um, they've been- like "If you're ever, like, on posters, or if you're ever, like, on billboards, in cologne, like if you're at a party, just tell us beforehand. So if there are any questions coming up we just know what you're doing." Um, but they're always fully fine. Like, there's- if there's something that is a little bit more, like I once worked at a like, you could say like fetish party, but as like, an organization not actually as an artist. So I told them that this is happening, they're like "Yeah well it's okay, like just don't tell everybody here that you do this--

Interviewer: [laughing]

Bijou: But it's gonna be fine." But like also there I was surprised that it was received very well.

Interviewer: That's great.

Bijou. Yeah.

Interviewer. Um, so what, what is your drag name and where does it come from?

Bijou: So my drag name is Bijou, um my actual name is Nick, and um, when I was thinking about like my drag name I was like okay, if, I knew I don't want to have a last name, because I always loved artists who only have a first name. I think it's kind of like, makes it even more mysterious to just know one name, and there's not like a full on name there. Um, I also find it a little like, witness protection program, to have like a first and last name as an artist. I always loved like Madonna and Cher just be like, "We have one name, that's it." Um, so I was thinking about like, how do I, how would I describe the character I'm going for? I knew I want to be kind of like a little bit androgynous in a way of like body shape. I don't really pad, I don't wear boobs, um, I corset from time to time if it fits to a certain look, but I kind of like my more androgynous, very slender body, then with like a full on, like makeup and hair. Um, it also fits to like the eras that I like. The like 20s and 30s because that was kind of like the body shape that was very, like, on vogue, you could say, in that time. Um, so I knew I wanted a little bit androgynous, I wanted to be kind of classic, show girl, but at the same time with modern twists, so I didn't want to be "Miss" something. I was like, okay let's do something that is like a little bit more modern, but at the same time gives the vibe off I am someone who like dresses and is interested in vintage, and vintage showgirls. Um, I also knew that I want it to be French, so some kind of like French twist to it, because I really love like the 20s and 30s and Paris and the showgirls from Paris, Moulin Rouge. Um, and then I like wrote down, um how would I describe my character? And I came up with like one sentence that I am the jewel of the Parisian night life, and I was like stuck to the jewel. I was--because I had French in school I was like, wait, uh, French word for jewel is bijou, and then I was like that's it. I, I wrote a couple of my friends and been like "what do you think about bijou?" And they were like "for what?" "my drag" and they were like "that's dope," and I was like okay we're settled.

Interviewer: [laughing]

Bijou: I attached it to the first application, and I was like okay now it's official [laughing], we did this. I like it because it is kind of androgynous, it could be a guy, it could be a girl, it's short, most people are--it's easy to remember. Um, so yeah, I stuck with that name up until now.

Interviewer: Do you think that, um, the type of drag that you do, like you were describing your 1920s type of style, do you think that that affects your life as a drag artist?

Bijou: It does. Um, I am more limited to, um, certain environments and certain performances I can do. I can do modern, like I did a couple of gigs for sure, like in like these typical, like, leotards, like sequin leotards kind of numbers. Which I also enjoy from time to time, I love when someone literally asks, like "We know you do this, but could you do something more modern? Something, more like, loud and energetic?" I'm like sure. Um, but I always had kind of like a long for it, like the classic, like, burlesque, and cabaret. Um, and I knew I want to mainly do this. It's also fits more to like how I am presenting myself as a drag artist and kind of like the personality I have in drag. Um, but I would immediately like, got to know, it's like okay, you cannot apply for certain, in fet-- like parties or something like that with your style because it just does not fit into the environment. So I mainly work at the cabaret shows and burlesque shows and burlesque festivals. Um, which is great, which I absolutely love, I think especially the burlesque, um, community is one of the most, like, inviting, warm, supportive, environments or like communities that you can find. Um, but it's limited because we don't really have a lot of that. I think the burlesque scene in general is fairly small, and especially in Germany for some reason, so I have to travel a lot, like in Cologne I rarely find jobs. I travel a lot to Berlin, or to Hamburg, Germany which um just has more of a variety of drag artists, and like more of, um, opportunities to work in kind of like the room that I work in. So I know it's limits me to opportunities, but at the same time I kind of think that's also a blessing, because I don't-- if you do a lot, if you go to a lot of like parties and a lot of opportunities, um people get sick of you quicker. They'll be like "okay we've seen you here, and here and here, like we need someone new." Um, but at the same time it's also like I'm---immediately I get more um, like now I'm looking for the English word, um, more picky you can say, more picky with where I perform, and I think that also like keeps up my quality. So it's a curse and a blessing sometimes, but I love it, and I will not stop doing it. And I kind of like really found my home in this style. So, I'm okay with having less opportunities. I mean, as of right now, obviously nothing's happening.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Bijou: We're currently in another lockdown in Germany, so um, that's that. Um, I have-- the last performance I had was in October 2020, and before that it was like a whole year--

Interviewer: Oh wow

Bijou: That I had nothing. I'm doing a lot of photo shoots now because that's possible to do, but like performances is like, done for now. Um, but like that's what I'm realizing that happens, but at the same time that's not that big of an issue for me.

Interviewer: So, there are a lot of terms for types and styles of drag, from drag queen to drag king, and among others. Um, what label would you use to describe your drag?

Bijou: Um, I think drag queen is kind of like, I know it's like the general word for it, but I think with the term of drag queen, you immediately have a certain picture in mind how that person looks like, what kind of things this person does. Um, I see a lot of people, especially, like for example, Violet, or um Sasha Velour, or the winner of season 9 of Ru Paul's Drag race that they kind of, um, went away from the term drag queen to drag artist because they realized the, the picture that people have when they hear drag queen is not what I represent. Um, so I also always in applications or anything, I always put I'm a drag artist, so I'm. It's mainly because like with drag queens a lot of times, um, they also create like a completely new persona, like visually they are completely different, very over the top, huge hair, crazy performances, and for me it's kind of like, I almost stick to kind of like how I look like out of drag, with like black hair and black, bigger eyebrows, and it's mainly like I've feminized my outer appearance to have more opportunities to work artistically. It's not to like completely get rid of who I am in that moment, so I always say I'm an artist who uses the art form of drag or specific elements of drag to make more art happen for me. So that's why I'm always saying I'm a drag artist, that's, I also, I'm fully fine with people just calling me a normal artist or a performer or a burlesque performer. Um, I just started modeling for an agency and they just have Bijou and just model, they don't even mention that I'm a drag artist. They obviously mention that I'm a guy, they have to, um, but I am not very into labels. I just do what I do, and if someone wants a label, I say I'm a drag artist, I'm, or I'm an artist who uses drag to like, make um their art happen. But um, I also kind of found myself going away from the term drag queen. Because I also think that they are like, drag queens who do drag the way we think of drag, that they should have their bubble. Because what they do is like still so different from what I'm doing and what other artists like me do that I want them to have their platform, that people know what they get when they book them, and people like me just kind of be like, okay well let them do their thing, let them have the term drag queen so everybody really knows what they're doing. And we kind of like go into room of drag but use a more general term to describe what we are doing.

Interviewer: Who or what has influenced your drag?

Bijou: Um, I think a huge influence on my drag, first of all I think of other drag queens. Obviously, it's easy to find inspiration in other drag queens or other drag artists in general. Like, some of my biggest inspirations when it comes to drag is Violet Chachki which um, I was very blessed to be able to meet her kind of right when I started drag at a meet and greet. And she like really took time, so you had like, two, three minutes to actually talk to her. So I like, asked her like two questions that I was always like very interested in, and she kind of like told me, um, I don't see really flaws, but if you wanna like have um, any tips you can do this and this and this, like because we are very similar in what we're doing. Um, which was very great. I am heavily inspired by Sasha Velour, kind of like just her mind is so out of this world, so I like to see what she's doing and kind of think how can I take inspiration from this and put it into my kind of drag? Um, but also I think like actual women, Dita Von Teese is a huge inspiration, but also Lady Gaga, old like Hollywood showgirls or actresses, Rita Hayworth, and um, classic like burlesque performers from like the time of the 20s to like 40s, um. I think also a huge inspiration is like pop culture in general, and fashion. Like I always love fashion designers a lot, so um, even for my costumes that I make for, for performances, I sometimes love to go to certain designers I love, like McQueen, [inaudible] and just see what they have done in their body of work and just take certain elements and put them into what I'm doing. So I think I kind of get my inspiration from everywhere, um but I have a very clear eye for what I like and what I scan. Cause I can watch certain things or see certain things and be like yeah that's nice, that's nice, but I always stop at a certain point when I see this is something that I'm more interested in. So like, that's kind of like where I get most of my inspiration for what I'm doing.

Interviewer: Um, do you consider your drag political?

Bijou: I think drag is always political. I think there's no way of being someone who does not fit into the heteronormative, cisgendered society and not say that you're not political. Because our politics, like politics and everything that's happening in governments, no matter where, is always heavily based and most influenced by heteronormative, like ideas, and cisgender ideas, and like the identity of people like that. Um, so, I think every time you step out out of your house and don't fully try to fit into the norm that we have, it's always political. Cause you're always, even if you don't want to, kind of work for progress. Because progress always, like, I think political progress, progress always starts in society itself. I can see it in Germany a lot, we have a very range, like our Government is mainly based on a very conservative, um party, um they are fully fine. Like we have, we're also very privileged in Germany to have a lot of like, um, a lot of rights. We're, we have um, the right to marry whoever we want, we um, we are very supported and secured by law. But at the same time, you can tell there are certain things they don't want to change. Um, we cannot donate blood as an example, still not allowed in Germany, and I think because our society is still also very conservative, and have a special like, older generation that is still heavily conservative, this will not change because they will still vote for this party up until the point where like, I don't know what they have to do to like, for people to be like "oh not gonna vote for them anymore." Um, with COVID as an example, they're really fucking up a lot of stuff right now in Germany unfortunately. We're in month 5 of lockdown again, um, like the vaccination is so damn slow. Like we have no vaccines, like everything is like so crazy and nothing is organized. And now is the first time that people are like "oh maybe we're not that great." But they still will be voted because it still fits to society. And, by just being different and being out of the norm, you open eyes of other people in our society a lot, and by opening just a couple of eyes, they will also go to other people and be like "Oh I met that person. Like, that's totally cool. Look at this, look at that." And society starts changing in itself, and then politics change, because then the first time this society will be like "Are the people in government who are currently representing us really representing the society we live in?" No, not anymore. So, they make a change. That's why certain parties, um, especially parties who are heavily involved in climate change and saving our planet get more and more popular in Germany because the minds of people change and they're realizing it's not all about money and big corporations, it's also about smaller people, about people who are more like on the, like, room of being like, poor and having nothing. And, so like, by being us and getting out there and doing what we do, and especially drag, because especially drag fucks with like society norms so much. It's--for some people it's almost like not understandable how it can give up that privilege as a man to be feminine, because I know how feminine individuals are treated in our society. So like for them it's like totally crazy and it's like it completely shakes up their whole idea of feminine and masculine. Cause sometimes I had people looking at me from afar being like "that's a woman." Then I come close and they're like, "Oh that's a man. What's going on?" So they realize that like gender and especially like the appearance of certain genders is just a full on social construct that has nothing to do with how it can work and what's actually possible. So, I know there are a lot of drag queens who say "Oh I won't, I would never like to be political." I'm like, you--you are. Like there's no other choice. I would never like say that I am heavily in politics, like I'm not in a party, I'm not like going to like huge rallies for certain parties, um but I know that just by being me I can make a change in a sense, or can open some eyes, and I know that this is happening. Cause even at work when I see, like, people who never were never in touch with it, or like even friends and family who never in touch with it, and they see what I'm doing and they looked up into drag and now they have a complete different mindset on it, I know that this changes a lot of the perspective of people and with that over time, it will be a long process for sure. We've come a long way but it will at least be like, another 30, 40, 50 years for huge change to happen because, first of all, at the certain generation, even if it sounds very crazy, has to die. Like the generation that will never ever understand, that it will never look past what they know, which sadly is kind of like a generation of like my grandparents. Although they are very open to everything I do. But I know that there are a lot of people in the generation that will never look past what they, like the status quo of like the 40s, 50s. Um, so like a certain generation has to die so like our generation, or the generation of our parents has to become the older generation, like the generation that my grandparents are now, to kind of like be more open. And like my generation has to become the age of them, of the generation of parents, to really make things happen because unfortunately, it's the generation between 40 and 50 who really make change happen the most. Um because they A get taken more seriously in our society but they also have just more options to like be out there in comparison to people my age. We're not really taken seriously, we don't have like the funds to do certain things, we don't have the voice right now to do certain things. So it will be a lot of progress, but I think what we're doing right now and like, even like having Drag Race on TV or having um like more and more people like me involved in more mainstream media, it will change something, and over time I think it will change society and politics a lot.

Interviewer: So, can you talk about what your life is like as a drag artist? Like, are you part of a drag family, house, or collective?

Bijou: It's, I think in my normal day to day life you cannot really even tell. I think even if you come into my apartment like I have a separate closet where everything is in. But, but, I need to, kind of need this at the same time. Because if I would be surrounded by my art all the time I first would never stop working on certain things and would overdo stuff, but also I kind of like the clear division of my normal life to the more, obviously more crazy and like, sometimes even more stressful life of an artist. Um, so, if you come to my apartment or if you're like meeting me for the first time, you wouldn't like really know. I'm also not someone who like is at the first sentence "Oh, I'm a drag artist as well." So it's like very low key in my day to day life. Um, if I get in drag or if I'm like in the process of creating things if I'm at jobs, I'm always very like, I would say, I am extravert for everyone around me, but I'm more an introvert in the surrounding of other artists, cause I'm always very focused on what I'm doing, and um I'm unfortunately a crazy perfectionist so I always look at everything like "Is everything fine? Is everything good?" Um, as of like being in a drag family, no. Um, that's not that big of a thing in Germany. I know we have like a couple of drag houses, but they also don't have like a clear like mother like house mother and then like children, they just came together-- they're more like a collective in a sense. They came together because they have a similar aesthetic. But that's not a huge thing in Germany to have like houses or huge collectives. We definitely are in touch, so like if we get to meet each other we stay in touch, if we can then borrow something from someone, we use connections that another drag artists has for us. Um, and vice versa obviously. And, um, that's kind of like how drag and how drag things work in Germany, we kind of like share connections, share ideas, ask someone I was like "Do you think this is cool?" Um, as of for me personally, because I am way more into cabaret/burlesque community, um, that's what I would called my community and my home in a sense, um, we are a huge community, so we stay in touch through like certain Facebook groups or like group chats, um so that’s kind of like how I am positioned in a sense. But I work mainly alone. So like, my performances are alone, how I come up with things most of the time as I'm doing it alone, or I do it on my own. I think alone isn't the right word, [inaudible] on my own, and always with knowing that I can ask certain people for opinions or ideas, um but I'm not part of a house, we're not like, you know, I don't know, huge dynasties like you have in like America where you have like huge like, like houses where you have a house mother and then you have like all the children, like that is not really happening in Germany.

Interviewer: So, I know things are different, with, um, you mentioned the lockdown and your ability to perform, but, I guess, well you could talk about prior to and now. But how often do you perform and where do you perform?

Bijou: Um, because I am working full time during the week, um, most of the time on the weekends. If there is, if there was something that I really wanted to do where I was like I really want to take the opportunity, I took time off from my normal day job. Um, which they are fine with, like if you are still able to do your normal work while you're here, we don't care if you take one or two days off to go somewhere and work in your art. They're fully fine with that. Um, so most of the performances are on weekends, sometimes on like, if it's on a Friday I do a half day on Friday and then I drive to the performance. Um, so I think in 2019 I had, I just started, but at the same time I think I had like 18-- around 20 performances. So I had most of the time I had at least one a month. Um, in the beginning of 2020, I had from January to March, up until the point where it was forbidden to perform, I had I think 10, and then I had 2 at the end of 2020. And then we got into a lockdown, so like I am kind of like had nothing for like um first of November up until now. It will stay like that for a long time. We kind of asked, or like artists asked when is the first time you could see performances happening again. They've been like if the vaccination kind of like works out better, and if like, the cases stay down, they say like late summer. So we probably, like my first performance will be the one that I am still currently booked for on the first of September. Let's see if that works. But um, I'm not doing it full time. It's mainly when I have the time I do it, and I'm also very picky with what I want to do, so I don't take everything that comes in. Um, but it’s enough. Its fully enough for me. Because I think if I would do it too much, I would ---It would lose that feeling of something special for me. Um, so I think the things that I do are for me currently fully enough. And, um, it's at least like once a month there's something going on that I can then a whole month, have a whole month to prepare for it which is also what I love, the whole process of preparing things, creating performances. Um, so I know there are artists who do like every night, and then there, in Germany, and then there are artists who like appear at some points and do something and then they go back to their normal life.

Interviewer: What goes into getting ready for a performance?

Bijou: Uh, seven pounds of makeup! [Laughing]. Um, most of the time for me it’s like I, I hear a certain song, or I have a certain idea for costume, or I have a certain idea for movements I want to incorporate. Then I sit down and I um, like just take everything I have as of right now like together for, for a certain number. And most of the time it starts with, like, choreography. Basic choreography, I know how the costume has to what kind of special, like, knickknacks the costume has to have, um then I know when, I know what the costume's gonna be, I know what hair am I gonna wear with it, what accessories. So most of the time it starts with I have an idea, somewhat idea, for a performance. I sit down, take either I already have the song or I look for a song, then I look for choreography, then costume, then like the little fine details. And then right before a performance, it's a lot of just practicing, um, because I would never feel comfortable going on stage and only having practiced that performance like two or three times, so I practice it a lot. Most of the time, I film it and send it to like people I know always give an honest opinion about it. And, um, if I feel ready and comfortable with a certain new performance and a certain new number, then I, I, either like if I'm booked for something I take it, or like I apply for something with that certain number, and then right before the performance, I don't think about it a lot anymore. Like, if I'm in makeup and I'm just waiting to get on stage, the last thing I think about is the performance itself. Like sometimes I think about what I'm gonna eat afterwards, or like what I'm gonna...so like to get my mind off of thinking too much about what I'm gonna do in five minutes. So that works out very well for me. I'm still get like, I still get very anxious, but I think that's a good thing if you still get very anxious before going on stage because it shows that you still care to be at your best. Um, so most of the time its like a lot of preparation, a lot of finding confidence and feeling comfortable in this number, and then when you have to do it, just do it.

Interviewer: What are the biggest challenges to doing drag and being a drag artist?

Bijou: I think there's a certain, um... I think first of all, like if you look at how we are viewed, um, I think in society as I already said it's like it can be an issue, um because sometimes you cannot talk openly about what you do because you know that like it could get you into trouble, or like have a negative effect on your day job or maybe like certain relationships you have, so that's always a struggle. Um, it's expensive, I think drag is very expensive. It's not an art that you can just do with a couple of dimes. If you really want to do it professionally and if you really wanna come across as a professional, it will be expensive. Most of the costumes have to be made to like really fit you, um wigs are expensive, makeup is expensive. You at least, I always say, at least throw like twenty-thirty bucks away every time you just get into drag because um, you use certain things and you have to throw away certain things that you wore because you cannot be able to wear them, and that's always like kind of an issue in the beginning when you don't really have money to like really get into it. Um, drag is hard on your body sometimes because we don't really have an option to just get on stage, in like for example flats and and just something. Like we always have to, to like make this appearance, make the like vision happen we have to most the time wear high heels and corset and wear padding or whatever, and wigs get heavy on your head and everything is very tight. So that also can be an issue if you're in a surrounding where it's like oh you have this one performance at that time and five hours later you have the next performance. You're like "oh my god, how am I gonna survive that." Whereas like other artists can just be like, taking the shoes off, getting somewhere, whatever. Um, I think what also makes drag very difficult is finding a way to divide yourself from the drag character. Because if you get too much into your drag character, um, things can pop up in your mind of like "Am I trans?" Um, "What does it mean for my gender identity?" Like, if you're in drag too much, kinda like your personality as a queen and your own personality can like mix up in a way that is, can be difficult for like, still knowing who you are and finding yourself in like later years. Um, and I think also what makes drag sometimes very difficult is finding job opportunities. Because I think people have a very---there are drag queens out there that have done some damage on reputation, um because there are a lot of drag queens, especially in Germany, because there are a lot of drag queens who don't perform. They just go into clubs, they get drunk, they are very bitchy and very mean to people, but these are the kind of people who do drag to finally feel confident, and then they think they have to put other people, or  have the power to put other people down. So like the reputation for drag artists in Germany is a little bit difficult sometimes. I think when, I hear that a lot when people meet me for the first time they go "I would have never actually like booked a drag artist, but I saw you and I was like yeah why not? Let's try it out. And now I know there are other drag artists that are actually professional and nice." And I was like it's sad that this is the picture that people go into meeting a drag artist in Germany, instead of being like "Oh, what a cool artist" and like "see what they do? they like...oooh that can be difficult, that person can be difficult." So it is difficult to get job opportunities because I actually like to call for certain applications. And like, oh I just sent you mail but I also wanted to like quickly like say who I am on the phone. So they talk to me for the first time and they're like immediately have a different picture of me as of just seeing that I'm a drag artist and being like "Oh no, I don't want that at one of my venues" or something like that. "That person will just get drunk and be messy." And, um, so it is a bit more difficult to find actual professional connections cause there's a certain picture people have of us.

Interviewer: Is there anything unique to the drag scene where you live in Germany compared to other places in the country or the world?

Bijou: Can you repeat the, the question?

Interviewer: Yeah, is there unique to the drag scene where you live compared to other places in the country or world?

Bijou: I wouldn't say so that much, because I think German drag is so heavily influenced by drag from other countries. So I think that we're such a mash up of different styles of drag from all over the world. I think for a long time, drag in Germany has been extremely influenced by American drag. Um, we have a lot of these like very classic, almost like pageant girls, although there are no real pageants in Germany, but their aesthetic and the way they perform and carry themselves is very much like these huge pageant drag queens from like, um, Dallas, or something around that room. Um, and then like later, like a lot of like the drag from, from the UK, especially London, came over. Like this more punk, a party girl, is kind of like going in, and then GoGo, like GoGo girls started happening which also came over from the UK. Um, I now see a lot of inspiration in Germany drag from, from Asia. Um, so like the style that they have in Asia, and um, a lot from like, um, scenes like New York, like this club kid scene in New York. Um, but I think there's not necessarily something extremely unique, um because we are such a mash up of everything else because we don't really have references, so that's what, so we have to take reference and have inspiration from all over the world to like make something happen in Germany. Um, I think a huge difference is that we are so much less in our country. So, every performer gets unique in the sense of being like there are not a lot of people like that in Germany. Um, and I think one thing that is unique is we are not very connected in collectives, but we're stick up for each other a lot, and we're always trying to make sure that other drag queens get a fair chance for a job. People did that for me and I did it numerous times. Like "Oh you booked me, do you maybe need another performer because I know that person..." So that's what we do a lot, where in America, you have a lot of competition because there's so many they have to be way more competitive. Way more in a sense of putting themselves so much out there to get jobs and no one blends too much into like all these drag artists. And I think that in Germany where we have the privilege to get jobs, but at the same time we don't have to fight for jobs so much and even can get other people jobs, which is not happening that much in America. You have a lot of queens who are responsible for shows and for collectives in America and they get people in. But just a normal, working drag queen most of the time will let me [inaudible].. and in Germany difference is we are very much in a sense supporting each other although we're not that heavily connected.

Interviewer: How has drag impacted or changed you?

Bijou: I think how it changed me is like, I always was kind of like extraverted, but at the same time I think before I went into drag, people always told me I come off as very confident, which I was not. Like there was a long period in my, especially like in my later teenage years from like 16 to almost like 20 where I felt very insecure about my body because I am very slender, I felt very insecure about my place in our society and my place in this world. I didn't know what to do with myself. I started working in public administration, but I got very tired of it because I had no like outlet for everything else that was going on inside of me. Um, so I think drag in a sense gave me a certain kind of confidence to accept a lot of myself. Now that I'm doing drag, I see my body in art, or like I can create art with my body. I'm like, "Okay, your body's fully fine and fully great" and [inaudible] confidence and then made me feel way more comfortable in my body and the way I look. I always looked a lot younger and a lot more feminine than other guys my age, but now its also a huge plus for what I'm doing. And also I realized what I can do with my face, my appearance is great so I'm-- it gave me a lot of confidence in the person that I am. And it also changed me because I am way more balanced and I'm way more balanced out in like how I live my life because I now have something that secures my existence in a sense, like my day job and then I have something that secures my mental stability because I can create and I can do what I love. It also changed my perspective of society because I always thought that I cannot change something. I think especially as someone out of our community we sometimes feel we cannot really change something, there's so many people who live in this, in this norm, um that we will never be able to actually break it. And by doing drag, I just realized in just because I appear somewhere, it changes. I was like "Oh my gosh you can make change." So it also made me, it made me feel like more valid, like my existence is more valid, and it’s kind of like, I'm not just like breathing, sitting here, but I can make change. Um, it also opened my eyes for, because I unfortunately was also someone who feels very, not weirded out, but uncomfortable around people who don't the norm, especially gender wise. But it was mostly because I didn't know how to comprehend what I was feeling so seeing that made me feel uncomfortable in myself and then kind of made me go away from these people. And now I'm friends with so many people who are nonbinary, um are fluid with their look, um are trans, because I feel more comfortable around them because first of all I can now understand them a lot better but I also don't have this barrier inside of me anymore, so I automatically was able to let down the barrier outside of me for other people like that.

Interviewer: How do you identify in terms of your sex, gender identity, and gender expression outside of drag?

Bijou: Outside of drag I identify as a cisgender man. Um, I don't have body dysphoria, so I don't look into the mirror thinking that this person is not, the person I'm seeing is not the person I should look like or be. So I do identify as cisgender. I am always describing as, I'm just very androgynous. So like if you put certain things on me or if I [inaudible] a certain way the kind of like lines of gender kind of get a little---somewhere they're blurry. Um, I kind of see gender and gender identity, everything on a spectrum. So if you have very male, very female, I'm kind of floating in the middle with a little bit more to male. Um, but it's kind of like why I love to do drag, its because I have a strong feminine side and I'm not always willing or just don't want to give it the space in my day to day life. So I have now the opportunity to give that side of me a huge platform in drag. Um, so I would say I am just more androgynous, you can put me in anything, I feel comfortable in everything, um. For sexuality I'm gay, so I'm a gay male. Um, and yeah. I think that's, that's about it.

Interviewer: What pronouns do you use in and out of drag?

Bijou: Um, out of drag always depends. Like I am, like, as drag queens we love to say she or we call um, ourselves or each other by our drag name [inaudible], like I literally don't know half of the real names of people that I know from like performances. They call me Bijou, they have me saved in their phone as Bijou, even my seamstress calls me Bijou, although we most of the time see each other when I'm out of drag. So, out of drag, for everyone who does not know me as a drag artist, um, I prefer he. Um, I'm not really that---If friends are like "Oh she [inaudible] today?" Like I'm fine with [inaudible], but if like someone who does not know me at all asked what my pronouns are out of drag I would say he/him, I identify as male so I would like to be referred to as he/him. In drag, I also don't really care. Um, you can call me he, or you can say he's next, because underneath everything I'm still a man so that makes sense. But I always say just out of respect, because um, my art or the art of a drag artist is to make this vision happen of a feminine individual um, so if you say she or if you refer to us as female, um it just kind of like is a pat on the back of being like "You did this good" because the vision works. So, it's just kind of like, it just is a sign of respect and a sign of admiration we're doing if you say she, that's the vision we want to create for you and we would like to achieve. But at the same time, I always say if you're in drag, if you refer to me as he/she or they, I don't care, everything's fine. Out of drag, you can say, well I prefer he, but if people who know me say she or they I'm also totally fine with that. I am not very stuck in a certain way I want to be referred as. Just not say it and then I'm good.

Interviewer: Has drag influenced your sex and gender identities?

Bijou: I would say I feel more at home in my male existence because I now can be, can be more masculine and have like my--like I always say like I can use my man time. Like that's what I like to call it. I just have my man time when I'm just like in a hoodie and jeans and like with messy hair [Inaudible]... so I feel more comfortable and feel more at home in my male existence, male body because I now have this like outlet to give all my femininity and everything and in that regard, and give it room to grow and like present itself. So um, I think it just made it more clear for me because there was a time where I was especially when I was like I would love to dress up, to wear this, but I was like what does this mean? Like I am maybe not cisgender male. And I started doing drag I realized I loved doing this as an artform but if you would ask me after an hour of doing, like ask me to change out of  drag, I would be like I would love to. I don't want to look at this anymore [laughing].

Interviewer: [laughing]

Bijou: So I now know, you are cisgender male and this is your identity. But you're at the same time someone who feels comfortable in a feminine appearance and who can use this to create and so it just, it just made it more clear for me where, how I identify. Um, and it made me just in general feel more comfortable in my masculine being and my feminine being, which had a huge influence on a lot, on my confidence, how I approach people, it had a huge difference, made a huge difference also in terms of like being in relationships or even sex like, that makes a huge difference because you now know who you are and you know how you identify and it completely changes everything and it just takes all the doubt away. So that's what drag did for me in that sense.

Interviewer: If you could go back in time, what advice would you give your younger self?

Bijou: I think my younger self, I would just literally be like do the things that you want to do. It's whatever. Stop thinking about everything too much, just do it. Cause it was such a long time, even with drag, I was like -- I could've started way earlier, but I was like oh I don't know, I would just tell myself like just do it. If something in you tells you to do this, and you know like by doing it you don't hurt anybody or you don't hurt yourself, just do it. And you don't have anything really to lose, and if it doesn't work out, it doesn't work out then you know that, but if it works out, you just have more time. Because what I know is I will not be able to do drag forever. I don't see myself being 50 and still doing it because the way I'm doing it and the way how I want to look like, how I want my appearance to be like, and how what I want to do, the time is limited, and sometimes I think it would have been nice to start it sooner because you would maybe like three or four more years of doing what you love so much. So I always just be like, just do it, just do whatever, and really stop thinking about what other people think, because I-the only people that you should care about and the only opinions should care about are from people who you care about. If there's someone out there on the street telling you you look like shit, why should you care? You never asked for their opinion, you don't necessarily care for that person, their opinion. So just don't bother and don't think about it. I think that's also something I would tell myself is just be more you at a younger age.

Interviewer: I'm curious if and how your social identities have impacted your experience of drag, or how drag has impacted your identities. So, could you share about how one or more of your social identities, like gender, race, class, um, religion, or the interaction of those identities have impacted your experience of drag?

Bijou: Um, I would say like I also was like very iffy and very like, when it comes to religion, which comes from the fact that I am also, I think it's Catholic. Yeah, I think yeah the Christian--I'm a Chris-- I was um, a Christian and I was Catholic. Which, is um a very interesting religion to be in let's just say that. I was always very iffy about it. I stepped out of it when I could, so when I knew I'm in a secure work environment because it's also like, if it says you left church there can be bosses that are gonna be like "Okay," um. It's unfortunately still a thing in Germany, like everything's very influenced by religion. Um, so, when I felt secure in my life I was like okay I'm gonna get out of this bullshit immediately so I stepped out of church. Um, I don't want to be part of something that literally wants to see me in hell, why should I? Um, so I like to make fun of religion now, that happened with drag. I have a number to Personal Jesus by Depeche Mode where I'm like the most sexed up pope that you could ever see, and like lingerie and everything but like a full pope outfit. So I kind of like like, I like to make fun of certain social constructs in drag. Um, I think I'm just, I'm just more, or the more i got into putting my being different out there, I am now can more understand and feel for people who always had to do that. Um, I have friends who are black, I have friends who are Muslims. Being Muslim in Germany is kind of like also, like I think in America it’s also very iffy if you say you're Muslim they're like "Oh my God terrorist," whatever, and it's the same in Germany I think because of the huge refugee crisis, um especially since like 2015 Muslims have a very hard time in Germany being accepted just for their religion which I think is absolute bullshit. Um, and I can feel more for that because when I'm in drag or when I am more feminine or I less and less fit into the norm in that moment, I get so much unnecessary, sometimes so much unnecessary hate and or just weird looks for no reason, but I can always take it off. I can always be like "I can go back to this" and I have it way easier, and they can’t. As a Black person, you cannot just take the Black skin off and be like "yeah now I fit your norm" or as a Muslim, as long as you're not completely changing your religion, which I think you shouldn't because that's also part of your identity, um, they have such a hard time being accepted and because I lived a more privileged life for a longer time fitting more into the norm, I never really thought about that. I knew that racism and, and being anti-Muslim, anti-whatever that that always existed, but I never really felt it that crazy. Um, but since I gave up a little bit of privilege because now people know that I do it, or they see me in it, I can feel more for these people. I would never say I understand how it is because I can't. As long as you have not walked in their shoes you will never understand how it is. But I have a better feeling of how it must feel like to really be judged heavily for something that is just part of you and um obviously being gay and being openly gay I already knew a little bit of that. But I think in Germany, it's way more accepted to be gay than to be Muslim or to be Black, which like is sometimes is crazy because you look at other countries and it’s like the worst thing you can be. So that's where we are very privileged in our community, and so I also never thought about it as a gay man, though too much about how crazy it can get on a day-to-day basis, but doing drag and presenting more feminine I now have a better feeling for when someone says "It's so hard for someone in our society to be different,' in the past I was kind of like yeah, but I'm like yes, you're right. So that has a changed a lot, and like my social identity I'm just way more I think, sens-- is that the right word? Sensible? Or like I'm way more, um, thinking about kind of my privilege and kind of like how rough life can be for others sometimes.

Interviewer: How do you define drag?

Bijou: I think drag is kind of like an art form that is, that cannot and also should not be defined. I think it’s also so iffy when people are like "drag has to be like this" or "that's the definition of drag," or, because I think art in general is never to be defined. I think like, I think as, I think drag can be defined as an artform that is tearing apart gender constructs. I think that's the only thing that I would define drag as. I think everything else should be completely open because it's so divisive inside the drag community to define it, and then --- Because I would probably fall out of the definition as well. So, um, I think drag itself should not be defined, or there should not be a real picture of what drag is, but if I would, if someone would ask me "what is drag?" I'm like drag is an artform that tears apart gender constructs that we have in our society to influence the view on our norms society, on what gender and gender identity, and appearance of certain genders is really like, that it’s not just A and B but it's a whole spectrum that is so fluid, and that is what drag is really doing and what drag is about.

Interviewer: You kind of answered this in that one, but um, what do you think is the purpose of drag?

Bijou: I think the purpose of drag is kind of like, first of all I think it’s just to give people like us a stage, or like a platform of presenting themselves. Because before drag there was not really a platform for artists like us to work. You had these like very typical male performers, they did most of the time some kind of music or been serious actors or whatever but, but then you have women who were like dancers or whatever but, you never really had a place for people who don't fit into classic picture of a man or classic picture of a woman to make something, to make art, to make art on a broad spectrum for a lot of people. Um, so I think it just, I think drag, or the purpose of drag, is to give people who don't fit into norms a platform to create and be taken seriously as an artist. Um, I think the purpose of drag, right, is to like tear apart gender constructs, tear apart the idea of gender. Even if you look highly feminine, it still is, you could be like "yeah but, um, that person or like that man dresses up as um, how a woman is perceived in our society or how a stereotypical woman is looking like." And I'm like that's true, but a man is able to do that, not just a woman, so that's also tearing apart the construct. There's a whole man underneath there but this person looks like a woman to you, like a stereotypical woman, so the picture you have of biological females it not working just for biological females, so that's also tearing apart kind of like the constructs we have. And I think, also like the purpose of drag is to, also for, for, actually for some trans individuals, to find out that there are trans. I will always say and this is so important to keep being trans and being a drag queen completely apart because it's not the same thing. A drag queen is someone who does it for art purposes, or for like just living out, kind of like ideas and um a certain part of their identity that they have, and a trans person is something completely different, and but some trans individuals, and we see it on Drag Race as well, we have so many um, queens who are now trans women. I found through drag that they're not only feeling comfortable as a woman in drag, but they wanna feel like that all the time, so it can also be, drag can be a way of really finding out who you are in a safe and almost playful way.

Interviewer: Do you think drag is sexual?

Bijou: Can be. Obviously, we are highly fetishized, and there are a lot of people who have like a huge fetish for drag artists which I mean, you do you, if that's your thing, you go girl. Um I know that there are a lot of drag queens that are into this as well who kind of like get off on that. I think it will always be a little bit sexual, um but I think everything is kind of sexual. I think like no matter what, I think like even ice skating is somewhat sexual, like you have a man in tight tights and a tight shirt with like-- I mean everything can be sexualized and everything is sexualized unfortunately nowadays. Which, where I'm like y'all need to chill for a second, um but obviously like, like, especially how certain drag queens are dressing and presenting themselves as these crazy high feminine personalities with huge tits, huge ass, like dresses that are this short, it-it will be sexual in a sense, but I would never say that drag comes from or is for sexual purposes.

Interviewer: How do you feel about Ru Paul's Drag Race?

Bijou: I like it for, I like it for entertainment purposes. I watched it religiously, I still do, um mainly to like get to know other drag queens, get to know how drag is looking like in certain cities or from wherever you are. I think now that we have like Drag Race Canada, and UK, and America, and Thailand, and it will be in Australia soon, and we have it in the Netherlands, and it will be in Spain. I think it will be just so interesting to get to know different kind of drags from over the world. I think what's very important especially from the view of a drag artist is you cannot look at drag race and think that this is what drag is about, or that this is what drag is. It's a reality TV competition; we're not always just screaming at each other being like "You look like shit! No you look like shit!" And I think that we still don't have bioqueens, so women who do drag, um, that, open, like open trans personalities still have such a hard time getting on it. I think it's, it is kind of, it is too exclusive in a way, and Ru Paul is kind of like too stuck in a certain picture that he has in drag, or has for drag. I think it also kind of, it's been very great, what definitely has to be said is drag was not how it was before Ru Paul's Drag Race. It was an absolute like underdog situation. No one cared for it, it was too weird, it was in the mainstream. It did so much for us drag artists that this show exists, and it gave drag queens the platform to show to the world like what we do is great, we are here and we are slaying and that happened for sure. Um, but it can also be a little bit destructive in the sense of how drag is presented, and how drag race itself is sometimes overly sexual for no reason, which then again makes people think we are only doing this for sexual purposes. So it think it's a curse and a blessing to have this show and um, I still watch it because entertaining, but I also know that when I see certain things okay this is far from reality. Um, but at the same time, I'm like oh my God, I just hope other people will not think that this is how everything is. Um, I hope it continues but I'm always someone, I said it, and I think, I hope it will happen soon, is that Ru Paul is stepping down, and gives someone younger with a more diverse view on drag the opportunity to change this institution, it's an institution now you can say, you know it’s like the Harvard or Yale of drag. Everyone wants to get there to like get, get whatever out of it. I think just someone comes across, or comes around, and is gonna be like "Okay, now we're gonna make it more diverse."

Interviewer: If you could change one thing about drag, the drag scene, or the drag community, what would it be?

Bijou: I would say that I would love to change, um, that every drag queen no matter what kind of style, or drag artist, whatever, what kind of style they're doing that they are accepting other styles of it as well, or as much as their own. Um, I hope for what we are doing inside the drag community that it will just be getting more, it will be more like okay, everything is great, like every style of drag is great, like everything has the same value. And then what I would love for the drag community to change on the outside perspective is that we can even be taken more seriously as artists, and that people will not always question what we do, and just take it and be like, it's just art. That's-that's it. And not think about it too much in the sense of like why is that person, what is that, that it’s just taken seriously as art and put on the same level as art in the sense of we don't have to always explain and always defend what we are doing.

Interviewer: What do you think are misconceptions that people have about drag?

Bijou: That we're all, that every drag queen is trans. Um, that every drag queen wants to be a women, um, that we are perverted or pedophiles or whatever that we are, um, that we are only in drag because we hate our male existence so much or the person that we are as male, um, there's so many misconceptions about drag I feel like, more misconceptions than real, actual conceptions of what drag is. Um, I think the biggest misconception is that we're trans, and I'm saying it's the biggest because it's the most hurtful for the trans community in a sense of them not being taken seriously as an actual person with a very certain and clear gender identity. They're like, "I am female," or like a transwoman is "I am female. I am female always, I have always been female and I'm not putting on the female and I can't take it off. I am this person," and some people think that, I even like know that this happened because I was once part of a situation where a trans person was asked that, it was like, "Oh um, I'm like, oh, but in the evening you can take this off." or like, I was just like what's going on? No. I think it's just very hurtful sometimes for the trans community like, that's why I am always making sure when I tell someone, um, that I'm doing drag, that I am not trans. And I don't want you to put us on the same level. That, it's just not fair. Um, so I think that's the biggest misconception cause it has a huge, negative effect on a drag queen but also on trans communities in general um, and I think the next misconception is we're not perverted, we're not doing this just for sex, we're not doing it because we're getting off on it. There are cross dressers that have a kink for this, or are doing out of fetish but, a drag queen, if they're actually a working drag queen [inaudible] is not doing these for anything sexual, for getting off on it or whatever. We're not trying to um lure straight men into having sex with us because we look like women. Um, we're not dangerous in a sense, because I think drag queens are sometimes even seen as dangerous for society or dangerous for certain people, for kids, or for straight men or whatever, which is also just huge--- I'm just a man in a wig making art for God’s sake, like that's the only thing I am like I don't have like, this plan in mind to take over the world or anything, I'm just doing me and doing art, and just see it as that and that's it. I think that's like huge misconceptions but there's so many um, that are still going around. Also depending on kind of like where in which country you're in, with how much people got in touch with drag.

Interviewer: What do you think would help change those misconceptions?

Bijou: I think if people would be more open for it, for drag. Like for, not doing it but just being around it, seeing it, watching it, um, learning about it, talking to drag artists. I see every time when I'm in drag like at our pride parade, and I talk to people on the borders of the street watching the parade, and, like, they've never been in touch with it, they're seeing sometimes even for the first time. As you're talking, you can see that like their whole perception changes of what I'm doing in like a two-minute conversation. And I think if people would be more open, especially people who are so much in this, our society norm, if they would be, were like "Okay I'm gonna get out of my norm, I'm gonna look past kind of like the edge of where I feel comfortable," they can learn so much more about our society and about life and about different people that are on this planet. And I think um, if people, if other people be more open to just get to know us. You don't have to like us. You don't have to like be a fan and [use??] the photo afterwards, but if you just listened, and kind of note what's going on, this will already change a lot of misconceptions because even if you're like I'm not a fan of, like, if you're ever in a conversation with someone and someone talks about cert-- or like is saying something that's part of a misconception, you can be like "I may not be a fan of it, but I know what you're saying is bullshit." And that would help, and um, I'm seeing that this is happening for sure. I'm, I really am. I see it on my Instagram when someone is like leaving a nasty comment like how many people like step in or are like yeah that's bullshit, like shut up, go away. And that would have not happened a couple years ago. People would have been like "Yeah, that's not nice but I'm not gonna say anything." I think people feel more comfortable supporting us now, and I think there's a change happening, and I think misconceptions get less, or like, um, they're not as widespread anymore, um. But I think if more people would be open for it and if more drag artists would be open for this conversation as well. Because I see a lot of people in our community that they're not really willing to get into conversation where they have to be a little bit more vulnerable. Because it will be a vulnerable conversation talking about why you do certain things, or why you don't fit the norm, but I know they're a lot of um, people out of  the drag community or even like the LGBT community who are not, don't feel comfortable getting vulnerable, but then they also have to accept that they cannot be part of progress. Because the only people who can really show other people who we are ourselves. We are the only ones who can do it. So, if you don't wanna go out into the world, into the norm, and show yourself and show, represent your community, then you can't expect change to happen quicker.

Interviewer: If you chose one thing you want people to know or learn about drag, what would it be?

Bijou: That it's fun. I think that it's fun. I think at the end of the day like, I think it's just fun to look at, it's fun to do, it's fun to be around drag queens because most of the time in drag we're our most like authentic selves, and like so, and like most of the time we are exuding so much confidence and fun. And I think if there's anything you take away from drag, anything positive, if you don't wanna get into politics or I don't know, tearing down patriarchy or whatever, if you just wanna get into something very on the surface of drag, it's fun. And I think, I know that there are people who come to drag performances and they're like, "I don't really even talk about like what you mean for society or for politics or whatever, but I just wanna be here because you're so damn entertaining and it's so much fun to be around you." And that's it. I think if there's one thing, if there's one thing that I can like explain to someone on drag where they don't really have to think about a lot afterwards is it's just fun. It's highly entertaining for both sides. So I think that's what I would love people to know is like no matter what you think about it, just come and watch and you will be entertained.

Interviewer: So that was um, the last question. Thank you so much this has been great.

Bijou: Yeah, thank you, thank you for, for even like doing, um, like this whole project, it's always great when people like take their time to like make something and really-- Because and I said like we don't sometimes have the opportunity to like really present ourselves and like explain to people, so like when people like you making these kind of projects, it’s even more, it's another opportunity for more people to just get to know us and get to know what we do and get to know the people behind it. So, I can also like say thank you like for, in the name of like the whole community I can say, that like you are also part of progress for us.

Interviewer: Well thank you, I appreciate your time so much. And um, enjoy the rest of your day.

Bijou: Thank you, you as well.

Interviewer: Buh bye.

Bijou: Bye.