Interview with Odette Dynasty O’Hara

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**Sabrina:** So, what do you prefer to go by? Do you... your name or you like your stage name?

**Michael:** So, depending on where I am and how I’m presenting myself in the moment, that is typically who I like to be referred to as.

**Sabrina:** Okay.

**Michael:** So, like, as of right now, out of face, as just regular old God-given me, I’m Michael Kenneth Wooten.

**Sabrina:** Okay.

**Michael:** And when I'm performing or stage or at events, I'm Odette Dynasty O'Hara.

**Sabrina:** Okay. So, one of my first question is, when did you first hear about drag, and what was your initial reaction to it?

**Michael:** Well, considering the first time I actually saw drag performers was via the movie To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! [Laughs] Gotta love it.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Uh, I was about 10, 11, and my mom said I literally watched it on repeat. I didn't understand what I was watching at the time...

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** These fabulous men in gowns, but those were drag queens, and I was enthralled. But my first time meeting a performer in person was in college. It was my, uh, junior year. I was graduating from a private Christian university.

**Sabrina:** Oh my.

**Michael:** In South Carolina, and it... like, drag was not even talked about at all, gay was nothing.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Right.

**Michael:** And, um, I was just a person who didn't belong in the world that I was trying to fit. And ended up... uh, went to a nightclub and saw a performer on stage and was mesmerized. I couldn't take my eyes off of her, and ended up after...

**Sabrina:** You’re fine.

**Michael:** Okay. So, after that, uh, I ended up meeting entertainers, hanging out with them. And I was just... I saw an opportunity for there to be... um, for there to be newness in the midst of whatever was going on in my life. So, yeah, did I answer the question?

**Sabrina:** Yes.

**Michael:** Okay. Thank you. You’re amazing.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] That's awesome. I, I can't remember my first time, like, experiencing drag. I think it was, like, my mom when we watched Rocky Horror Picture Show.

**Michael:** Really?

**Sabrina:** Yes. And that was just, like, the coolest movie ever, like, Tim Curry dressed up like he was, like, oh my gosh, like...

**Michael:** [Unclear].

**Sabrina:** He, he rocked that. [Laughs]

**Michael:** He did, he did.

**Sabrina:** Alright. So, when did you start performing as a drag artist, and why did you start performing?

**Michael:** Well, this is fun. So, I graduated college in 2009... or 2008, December of that year. And it was during the, the end of that year that I ended up coming out, and I was authentic with who I was. And the church no longer needed me. And I, I don't like them; they have their rules. Um, and ended up... I ended up homeless for a period of time. And it was a group of nine drag queens who took me into a one-bedroom apartment, like, the smell of man musk and Victoria's Secret Love Spell was everywhere.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Yum.

**Michael:** It was delicious and disgusting at the same time; a double D. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Love it.

**Michael:** So, ended up, um, they dressed me up and put me in a talent show, and I won. And...

**Sabrina:** That’s awesome.

**Michael:** Thank you. And that was December of 2008, and I have never... up until 2015, I was up on a stage every weekend. Um, and I... yeah, that's, that's what began it. What kept it going was the aspect... I am very much a community server. I love getting my hands in the dirt, I love being a part of growing things in an area and watching a community thrive, not just individuals. And for me, I noticed that people were attracted to the entertainer more than they were just the person.

**Sabrina:** Of course.

**Michael:** So, I had a stronger voice and more of a pull to get things done as an entertainer. So, the drive to create more, to create new, to allow my community feel better, that's what... that's what get me going.

**Sabrina:** That's awesome.

**Michael:** Thank you.

**Sabrina:** Okay. Alright. [Inaudible] it is still going... I think it's still going. We'll see. Alright. How did your family, friends and other loved ones recently... or, sorry, receive you becoming a drag artist?

**Michael:** Um, well, uh, [laughs] well, let's see. Since I started out... basically, I had, like, a clean slate of everything. Um, my family, there... there's a portion of them that I just don't talk to.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** 'Cause you learn as you grow up that there's no... that desire to make sure everyone is satisfied with who you are...

**Sabrina:** It kind of dissipates.

**Michael:** It does.

**Sabrina:** It goes.

**Michael:** 'Cause you realize they're not there to help you pay your bills. [Laughs] Their opinion really doesn't matter.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Yeah.

**Michael:** And at the same time, if they’re... they can't celebrate who you are, like you would celebrate for them, and that just means they're not ready for the new. And I don't have to be upset by that, I don't have to be hurt by that. And so, family-wise, my mom, my sisters were all socially independent of one another. But my mom, uh, she was, kind of, like, the base supporter for a while. I would receive packages in the mail for Odette and never for me. I'm like, "I could use a pair of pants for work, lady. Stop sending me wigs." Just like...

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Thanks, Mom, but uh...

**Michael:** Can’t wear this to work, thanks. [Laughs] But, um, friends-wise, I... true friends love who you are. They don't care about what is on the outside; they don't care about what's going on. True friends want to see the best for you.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** And those are the ones that I only listened to. And by the grace of God, they’re the reason I'm still here today. And so, yeah. Did that answer the question?

**Sabrina:** Mm-hmm. Yeah.

**Michael:** Okay, good. Thank you.

**Sabrina:** Of course, thank you. Yeah, like, my sister came out a few years ago now to me, and, like, she was really, really nervous about it. And, like, she... I had her stay the night with me at my apartment, and she's just like... the one time, uh, I was talking to her about how me and my mom were discussing how everybody was like, "I'm super straight, my brother's extremely straight," like, Sydney was just like, "Eh, we don't... we don't know what she is. She, kind of, just, like, is coasting. Like, this other one, she straight. She's like, "And like the baby, we don't really know much either."

**Michael:** [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** And I was telling her about this. She's like, “Oh, well, you know, actually, like, I'm not” I'm like, "Oh, okay," like, "cool."

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** She's like, “You don’t care?” "No." I was like, "You... as long as you only bring home pretty girls, like you brought home cute boys, I don't care."

**Michael:** [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** Like, just don't bring home any ugly girls. Like, if you're happy I... like, I don't care, dude, you know? You do you, and I'm here to follow and support.

**Michael:** I love that, love that.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Okay. Where does your drag name come from?

**Michael:** Oh! This is one of my favorite questions.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** So, my drag name, Odette. the original name, comes from The Swan Princess, um...

**Sabrina:** Okay.

**Michael:** Which Disney really should have really taken that by the balls and made it their own, but copyright infringement, you know?

**Sabrina:** Okay, whatever.

**Michael:** 'Cause The Swan Princess, out of all of the princesses that girls are introduced to or society is introduced to, she's the only one that did not allow people to accept her for only her beauty.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Like, when Prince Derek said, “I love you,” she... after they grew up together, you know, she asked him why. And he said, “Well, because you're beautiful.” And she goes, “That's it? Well, I'm out. Peace.”

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Thus the curse started and all that shit. Like, good job lady for having a voice. You got a curse. But it... she was willing to give up what would be easy... an easy road because who she is is much more important than what she looks like.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** And that, that's the message that I want, more than anything, for my character to represent, is an idea that who we are means much more than what we wear or how we look. It's what do you bring into this world, and how are you going to make a difference [unclear]?

**Sabrina:** I love that. Oh my gosh.

**Michael:** Thank you.

**Sabrina:** Of course. And it's great 'cause, like, we did... um, for dance, we did Swan Princess quite a few times.

**Michael:** Really?

**Sabrina:** Like, when I was little. Yeah.

**Michael:** I love it.

**Sabrina:** So, like, I know that movie. [Laughs] That's so cool.

**Michael:** [Laughs] Thanks.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] There are a lot of terms for types and styles of drag, drag queen, drag king, to glamor queen, male impersonator, comedy queen, bearded queen, queer artist, bioqueen, camp queen, among others. So, many. Are there particular labels you would use to characterize your drag? What kind of drag do you do, and what is your style?

**Michael:** Well, I am very first lady. I'm very, like, president’s wife...

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Like, you can take me out to dinner, and I won’t embarrass your ass. Like, that’s me. But I, I understand that our, our society is drenched in labels, like, it is one where you have to have the right label or address someone by the right way, or they'll get offended.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Um, to me, I never get offended unless someone intentionally goes to say something. Like, people just don't know, right?

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** But for me, personally, I, I competed in the Miss Gay America network and circuit. Thus, I am the current reigning Miss Gay Illinois.

**Sabrina:** Ooh, congrats.

**Michael:** Yeah, thanks. I get a lot of them.

**Sabrina:** She’s real pretty.

**Michael:** Little bracelets everywhere, you know?

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** But, um, in that system, they refer to entertainers as female impersonators.

**Sabrina:** Okay.

**Michael:** Because I'm not trying to be a woman by any means.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** So, therefore, any, any label that gives strong indication of pers-- um, uh, identity, I, I pull away from.

**Sabrina:** Okay.

**Michael:** Um, drag performer is used, for me, a little loosely within our community, just because it, it... everyone gets lumped up in drag.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** So, for me, as a female impersonator, I prefer... like, I love who Michael Kenneth is, like, I love me, um, and I love who Odette is, and we have to have the separation.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** And so, I, I, I attuned to that title.

**Sabrina:** Okay. I like it.

**Michael:** Does that help... did that help with the question part?

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Okay, cool.

**Sabrina:** Okay. Does the type of drag that you do affect your life as a drag artist? It’s like you, kind of, answered that already but... 'cause you had... put how you guys had to be...

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Sabrina:** It has to be separate.

**Michael:** Oh, the one part is, what... like, what style do I perform? So, like...

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** In the style, like, I am definitely... some would say I’m a dancing queen. I don't... even though I teach dance, [unclear]...

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Um,I don't... I don't attune to that too much.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Um, what I do is, uh, I'm very much a crowd reader, and I move off of the crowd. Um, and so, I'm very classy, very chandelier and all.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Uh, I'm very, uh... I'm... yeah. Like first lady librarian, like, you're gonna get a lot of glamor, but I'll even walk out in, like, a Chick-fil-A outfit and, like, call it a day, like, I’m good.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.[Laughs]

**Michael:** You’re going to be entertained regardless**.**

**Sabrina:** Right. Like, no matter what. Okay.

**Michael:** Exactly. I’m not drama, let's just say that

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Thank God.

**Michael:** [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** Who or what has influenced your drag?

**Michael:** My grandmother.

**Sabrina:** Oh.

**Michael:** She’s right up there. She’s so beautiful.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** And predominantly because she... out of everyone in my entire family, my grandmother has been there since day one, and has, has... not silently, but she's definitely, uh... when she speaks, it is a force, and she's always encouraged me to be who I am, to love who I am, and to pursue the best of myself. And Odette definitely carries that aspect for herself and the community.

**Sabrina:** That's great. Yeah, I think every once in a while, like, with my, my grandma you know, it's like, okay, well, what would she think about what I'm doing today? Would she be proud of me, you know? Like, so, sometimes that kinda gets you in check. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** Do you consider your drag political?

**Michael:** No, not at all, not at all.

**Sabrina:** Just from looking, umh, no.

**Michael:** No.

**Sabrina:** She's just pretty. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Yeah, she is. She gorgeous. She gorgeous. She know it.

**Sabrina:** Okay, this has a few things to it. So, can you talk about what your life is like as a drag artist? Are you part of a drag family, house, or a collective?

**Michael:** I am. So, I am... my drag family is one of my favorites, naturally, it's my family.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** But we are very independent. So, my drag mother is...

**Sabrina:** Alright.

**Michael:** [Unclear].

**Sabrina:** Good.

**Michael:** My drag mother is Eureka O'Hara from RuPaul's Drag Race Season 10, 11 or 11, 12.

**Sabrina:** Okay, side note.

**Michael:** Yeah?

**Sabrina:** We are watching that season.

**Michael:** Are you?

**Sabrina:** [Unclear] we were watching Season 11 in class.

**Michael:** That's my mother.

**Sabrina:** That's so cool. [Laughs]

**Michael:** That’s my mommy. [Unclear] Eureka, used to be in Johnson City, Tennessee, used to drive her ass everywhere.

**Sabrina:** You're making me jealous now, so, you're...

**Michael:** You're welcome.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** I’ll send you a picture of me with her.

**Sabrina:** Yes.

**Michael:** Um, so...

**Sabrina: "**Why are you being a bitch?", she says.

**Michael:** [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** That's, that's super cool.

**Michael:** Uh, is it recording?

**Sabrina:** Yes.

**Michael:** Okay. [Unclear].

**Sabrina:** It stopped. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Uh, so, like, she's my drag mother, but we are all... we're all independent, meaning, we, we do our own thing. We, we follow our own drummer, basically. Um, it's inspired me because the O’Hara family is one that... there's a certain level of expectation when it comes to us as entertainers. Like you... it's not that you do or... you do anything a certain way or wear something is certain way. It's literally about how do you make people feel when you walk in the room? That is... that's what we aspire to more than anything. It's transitioning the feel of the space. We are very much... our family, that it is not... has shit to do with you; it has nothing to do with the entertainer, period. It has everything to do with the person standing in front of you. And if you're... if you're not making sure that person is feeling better about their life, then what you're doing is, like, irrelevant to the culture. And so, that's, that's what inspires me from my family.

**Sabrina:** That’s awesome.

**Michael:** Thanks.

**Sabrina:** I think she was actually on both right?

**Michael:** She was. She had [overtalking].

**Sabrina:** 'Cause she got taken off... yeah. So, that's the one we are watching.

**Michael:** Okay.

**Sabrina:** Ten, I guess, if...

**Michael:** Yeah I think it's 10.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** I, I think. I don't know.

**Sabrina:** It is the one that had Trinity and stuff on it, her, you know, best, best friend.

**Michael:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well...

**Sabrian:** So... that's so, so funny. That's... [Laughs] How often do you perf-- how often do you perform, and where do you perform?

**Michael:** Um, well, I'm still new to St. Louis...

**Sabrina:** Okay.

**Michael:** And so, new to this region.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** I moved up here in 2017 that... right after Christmas that year. And I slowly started reintroducing myself into the drag community. Because I was on a quest to find myself when I first moved up here.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** Um, and in that process, I started... after a year of being here, started performing. And again, very slow. So, started at, uh, Bubby and Sissy’s in Alton, Illinois. Um, Taylor de Mornay, uh, was my roommate for a period of time, amazing human. And ended up... from there, started performing at Hamburger Mary’s on house cast every Sunday or every other Sunday, in spot shows here and there around town. But since COVID, I, I have yet to take in... the stage since. Um, which there's several things enveloped in that, but mostly it's just safety concerns.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** But I, I'm not sure when my character would come back on the stage. I was supposed to do a show on the 25th for a brunch. But now, life has changed that. So, we'll see, we'll see what happens.

**Sabrina:** Hopefully sooner than later.

**Michael:** That would be amazing.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] I'd have to know; I can come see you.

**Michael:** Yeah, come.

**Sabrina:** That's a fun one, what goes into getting ready for performance?

**Michael:** What doesn’t go into getting ready, yeah? [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Yeah.

**Michael:** You know, everything from breathing, to, to paint, to shoes and pain.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Uh, well... okay, so, there are different stages to getting ready. Uh, for me there's several things. Like, a lot of people are like, “You just put too much into it, Odette,” And like, no I really don't. This is... this is important.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Like, one of the biggest things for me is... of course, we pick our music.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** But I pick my music based upon the crowd I’m going to be in. 'Cause it's super important that I have a sign... I always take backups with me, just in case I get in the room and I'm like, “Oh no, this crowd is totally not going to love Beyonce. Let's give ‘em Gladys Knight,” like, you know, like, something like that. Um, R&B and R&B... [laughs]

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Bad reference, Odette.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** But, uh, I, I ha—drag, for me, is my form of meditation. Um, so, for me, I have to calm myself, and I have to get out of myself. So, the whole time of preparing, like, while I’m doing my face, is literally meditation. Soft music, like, listen... feeling how it's going, and feeling the person that I'm going to be that night. But then, of course, there's the hair, there's the shoes, there's... and I'm different. Like, I definitely have learned I don't have to work as hard to be beautiful as some queens do.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** And I think it's just from the inside, I really...

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Everything on the outside, it's just there.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** Like, it’s paint by numbers and, like, a little bit of spatula, like, who knows?

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

Michael: But, like, I don't... I could... I literally wear a burlap sack sometimes, and people are like, “Oh my god, that's such a nice outfit. How'd you get it together?” I'm like, literally pulling it out of the trash, [unclear].

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Like... but thanks.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.[Laughs]

**Michael:** It, it’s a Walmart bag. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** Yes. I can't even imagine 'cause, like, for dancing, like, I know how long it took us to get ready. And, like, we don't have to do nearly [laughs] half of the stuff that you guys do. So, like...

**Michael:** Well, hiding Kibbles 'N Bits and stuff.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Yeah, those are fine.

**Michael:** [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** Our hair is usually attached to our head...

**Michael:** Yes [unclear].

**Sabrina:** Usually, but...

**Michael:** There’s that one little curlicue just flying out.

**Sabrina:** It's a lot harder... I feel like it's a lot... it's real hard to change 'em 'cause, you know, you got the five billion things of hairspray and you gotta...

**Michael:** And the wires all in it. [Laughs] I get it.

**Sabrina:** Oh my gosh. Especially when we were in a hurry, you know, like, it’d be... for a point, it would be slicked back in a bun, then you had to have it, like, halfway down for your next thing and, like, wow...

**Michael:** Oh yeah.

**Sabrina:** Like, combing through the hairspray. Like, oh god, please stop.

**Michael:** I love...

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] What are the biggest challenges to doing drag and being a drag artist?

**Michael:** Oh, that question is so individual. Like, it's... meaning, it's, it's different for every person. Um, for me... uh, excuse me, water's biting back, for some reason. For me, as a performer, being in recovery, it is... it's hard... it's hard for me to truly allow myself to feel as free as I once used to feel. Um, because I get to a space where I am mentally invincible. Like, I can do anything, I can... I can take on the world, and for an addict, that can be very frightening.

**Sabrina:** Understandable.

**Michael:** And so... 'cause you feel like you can... you can slip up, and you can use one time and everything will be okay.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** And that's just not the case. So, I have to monitor myself mentally. And I have... for the first time in my life, I have a support team that they assist me with keeping me in check and keeping me humble, but at the same time, going back and forth into, into the dressing room, because you never know. You never know what you're going to get. That's always a frightening space for someone like me.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. Understandable. Is there anything unique to the drag scene where you live compared to other places in the country or world?

**Michael:** Uh, you know, I've lived all over this fair country of ours, [laughs] 'cause I'm a runner. Uh, and I would honestly say this region is very, very interesting, because when it... [clinking sound] [laughs] I love it. When it comes to the entertainers in this area, there is... there is a sense of family. But because Saint Louis has such a thriving history of pageantry, um, there is quite a bit of competition too in the mindsets of entertainers. And that's, that's not my shtick. Like, I've already had my national crowns. Like, I’m, I'm good. I don't want your job, boo.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** I just wanna show up and help you make your show great.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Right.

**Michael:** Like, what can I do to help you? But when you're someone who is genuinely that, that person who wants to give, I've found that even that itself seems threatening because people aren’t used to it.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** And so, it makes you question your motives too. Um, and so, everywhere else I've lived, there's been a general understanding that we're just all in this together. We’re all just bumbling men in gowns trying to make our best.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** Here it... there's been a little bit of a different experience. I wouldn’t say it's negative. Every-- everywhere has their perks. Um, for me, personally, I know I have to stay, stay as far back as I can from, from that energy.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. Sounds kind of negative.

**Michael:** I know, it does, doesn't it? I don't want it to. St. Louis is wonderful, but--

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] No, not like you sound negative. just like the whole aspect of that.

**Michael:** Yeah. They're great. They're doing their best.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Alright. And then, what has the COVID-19 pandemic meant for your life as a drag artist?

**Michael:** Oh, my life as a drag artist pretty much stopped when COVID happened. Um, and that's just... that's just out of fear and concern for not only myself, but my business and my life revolves around people of the older community, um, and I don't want to risk their lives too.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Um, but again everything is about perspective. So, COVID has done amazing things for the art culture as a whole because people who are serious, get... had the opportunity to really refine their craft in the privacy of their own home without the influence of others, which is super big. Like, entertainers get too mixed up with what other people think about them. But when you're stuck at home, having to create your own art, like, from trash, like, what do you do?

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Right.

**Michael:** Well, then, you begin to learn you.

**Sabrina:** Right. Yeah, you can just work on yourself and who you are as...

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** That's awesome.

**Michael:** That's been cool to watch.

**Sabrina:** It's like, kind of, almost like a blessing in disguise in that sense.

**Michael:** Oh, definitely. Everything is, isn't it?

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] I hope so. Hope... I'm still trying to figure some of that out but... [Laughs]

**Michael:** Oh girl, don’t make me cry. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** How do you identify in terms of your sex, gender identity, and gender expression out of drag? What pronouns do you use in and out of drag?

**Michael:** Yeah. So, out of drag, I take whatever; just don't be derogatory. Like, do—like, I'm not about, uh... I'm not about negativity all.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** And so, when someone projects that on me, then, then, I, I get very flustered. But I... like, he/she, whate-- I don't... I'm not a carer. Like, whatever, girl you say what you need.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Um, when it comes to... I think this was the best thing I've ever learned, when it comes to my sexuality, it's what happens between the sheets.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** No, my orientation is what happens between the sheets. My identity is what happens on the streets. And so, I am... in all actuality, I may be a beautiful gay man, but, like, sex happens like once or twice. Last week it was three times a week, but, like, that’s nothing.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** But, like... but if you identify me as just those three moments, then you're negating, like, hours and abundant life that no longer has a label, if that makes sense.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** So, I would much rather just be a human...

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** Instead of being labeled by my sexuality or being labeled by my, my orientation, whatever.

**Sabrina:** Right, as, like, a gay man that dresses up in drag and does whatever. You're just here, you do what you want, and you’re...

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Sabrina:** Here to live.

**Michael:** Hello.

**Sabrina:** YOLO.

**Michael:** YOLO.

**Sabrina:** I hate that but yeah. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Oh, my YOLO days are coming to an end.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** You tried... you said that the eighth time. [Laughs] Been there.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Has drag influenced your sex and gender identities and how?

**Michael:** Um, I mean, there’ve been times. You know, you see that one straight man...

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** You're like, “I got legs for you, babe.” [Laughs] That’s happened. Um, I would say, for the most part, no. I, I keep... I keep Odette kinda on a, a shelf in the aspect of who she is. She is too busy to be bothered with frivolous things as sex or... if that makes sense.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** So, um... and at the same time, my body is still owned by Michael. And so, if someone is to feel compelled to feel a certain way, I have to be present. Does that make sense?

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** So, it, it has to give respect to the, the vessel owner.

**Sabrina:** You want somebody to love you, want you, as you, not just as Odette.

**Michael:** Exactly, exactly.

**Sabrina:** I like that. Has drag influenced how you think about gender?

**Michael:** Oh, most definitely. Definitely. Especially when it comes to my brothers and sisters in the trans community. Like, it, it took me the longest time to understand fully. Like... and I still don't. Like, so I can never...

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** Put myself in any of... any of their shoes, but I definitely respect them. There is this energy that comes from an individual who is trans that is just powerful because they have owned who they are so much to the level of risking everything.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Like, what do I risk but a few glances and, like, some scoffs? They risk the vulnerability of, like, being seen and being heard and fighting for that to a level I will never understand it.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** And I love them for it. Like, I love their ten--tenacity, their, their ability to look past and just push for what they want. If we all had that strength, like...

**Sabrina:** Right, if only.

**Michael:** Yeah, seriously.

**Sabrina:** I... there's a few girls that I went to school with that are transitioning. I mean, like, they both look amazing just from, like, the pictures. We don't... we're not, like, super friends, you know?

**Michael:** Right, right.

**Sabrina:** But, like, of course, they post pictures of everything and, like, they both got these, you know, nice beards and stuff.

**Michael:** [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** It was like, “Yes, you work it.”

**Michael:** Get it.

**Sabrina:** It's like, you look so good. Like, good for you to be you, man.

**Michael:** [Laughs] Love it.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] It was just funny 'cause the one girl actually liked the guy I was dating at the time...

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** And she got real upset because, like, she wanted to go to the dance with him, and [unclear] like... now, I'm like, oh, [unclear] [laughs]

**Michael:** I love it.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Now you're... now you’re a dude. Cool.

**Michael:** Sorry for ya.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Have your sex and gender identities influenced your drag? I feel, like, we've, kind of, answered all of those and, like, together.

**Michael:** I feel like there’s a lot about sex, Jesus. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Only you know.

**Michael:** Well. Um, eh, meh, not really. Yeah, like, just because of the separatism that [unclear] over the two characters.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** No, in my... off the record, in my trashy days, who knew what I would bring home. We don't talk about that no more.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] We're all gonna have that hoe stage, it’s okay.

**Michael:** Girl, no more, no more, clear mind, please, please.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** I was young once. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] How has drag impacted or changed you? Has drag impacted your confidence as a person when you are out o—um, out of drag?

**Michael:** Definitely. Definitely. Um, drag has changed everything for me. When I first started performing, it was a means of getting Dollar Menu food that turned into a voice for my community that allowed me to know that we as individuals hold the choice to be who we want to be. And it’s that choice that dictates our daily actions and our daily goals. And so, for me, drag has taught me a lot can happen quickly, and the evolution of a human is very slow. It is being willing to go to each stage of it. And so, it's allowed me to see people for where they are in their journey, and not judge, not, not feel any kind of way, 'cause it has nothing to do with me.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** Um, one of the greatest things that I, I focused on and, like, learned in drag is, like, I refuse to never have an emotional reaction to anything that doesn't immediately affect my health or my wallet. So, if I'm not bleeding, and they're not stealing from me, what the hell do I have to worry about? Like, I’m like, okay.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Tell me more about how you feel, baby. And I... if it wasn't for drag, I would not have had that understanding at all, period.

**Sabrina:** Do you ever have, like, a conflict with yourself of like, like being Odette? Like, people think you look great or beautiful this way. Do you ever think, like, you is Michael are not as an attractive person or vice versa?

**Michael:** Uh, yeah. All of the time.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Very good question. So, I... when... I only go out as Odette. I do not go out as me. Predominantly because of that feeling itself. I feel like a fish out of water if I'm in the club, I feel... like, if Michael's there, I'm like, “Who, who brought this librarian in?" And, like, "Who is the weird guy?" you know, sitting in the corner?” [Laughs] Uh, because, like, that's her world and that, like, the commu— people... sometimes you just want people to see you, and your character sometimes stands in the way of that.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** And so, that's definitely been a point. But also, at the same time, I'm, I'm mixed race. So, I'm Black and white, and growing up in South Carolina you're just not supposed to exist.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** And so, I've also grown... Like I, was cultivated in that society of separating myself from myself. And it's, it's. it's easier that way, but at the same time, it can be very difficult.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** And then, you create something as beautiful as the studio, and you realize that both can live as one and change you lives together.

**Sabrina:** Yeah, that's, that's one thing I love alike bout dance and performing, it's like you can be you, but then, at the same time, you can dress up and put all this makeup on and have all these costumes and glitter, sequins, you know...

**Michael:** Definitely.

**Sabrina:** And, like, be dazzling and out and crazy.

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** And, you know, just feel loud. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Yeah, exactly.

**Sabrina:** If you could go back in time as Odette, what advice would you give to your younger self? So, like, if... both as Odette, so...

**Michael:** That’s gonna make me cry.

**Sabrina:** We can skip it if you want, I don’t want you to cry.

**Michael:** No. It has to come out eventually, I'm sure. Um, oh, one thing I would say... there are two actually. One is, make sure that you don't put your shows before family. Go to that fucking party. And the other is, you don't have to try everything to be accepted.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. That's the problem, is, people think, like, so many kids and everything out there, and it’s like, oh, you know, you have to do this to be cool to be accepted, and it's not.

**Michael:** It’s not the truth.

**Sabrina:** Rather be the loser. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Sabrina:** I, I was luckily very lucky with all that. And, um, I've always had to try really hard at school, so, like, I could have been a massive pothead, you know? I could have done this, I could have done that. But I was like, no, like, I'm focusing on school. I already have a hard enough time trying to do this. Okay?

**Michael:** Right, yes. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** Like, I don't need help. Like I'm, I'm a square; I didn't, like, start drinking till I was 21, like, I only smoked pot a few times, only 'cause it's been brought to me, and I was already drunk, so I'm like, "Fuck it, whatever, girl." [Laughs]

**Michael:** Well, YOLO. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** But I, I, I don't know, I'm very, very, very lucky in that sense of... and now, I just live through my guy.

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** He's, he's had his fun and tried his stuff. So, you know, it's, it's, kind of, nice having that, 'cause then you can hear about it. So, like, it's like, I'm okay, like, that one I'm good with. Thanks. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Right. I get that. Oof.

**Sabrina:** Alright. This is a long one. I'm curious if and how your social identities have impacted your experience of drag, or vice versa how drag has impacted your identities. Can you share about how one or more of your social identities such as gender, race, class, age, geography, religion, science, sexuality, disability, etc., and/or the interaction of these social identities have impacted your experience of drag, and/or how drag has impacted your experience of this social identity?

**Michael:** Yes, that's a long question.

**Sabrina:** Uh-huh. Well, do, do we need to go over it again, 'cause I might need to? [Laughs]

**Michael:** That’s, that's a long... So, the, the one I'm going to start with is my identity based in race, because... being mixed race. Like, and it's... a lot of people today, “Why is that such a thing?” It's very much a thing, um, because you never... you never feel like you have a side...

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** In an argument, or with a group of people. Like where's the other? Like, can we bring out an other parade? Like, where's that one? Give me the other parade.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. 'Cause it's like, who do you...? Like, especially with things now, like, who do you stand with? Do you stand with, like, Black Lives Matter? Do you stand with, you know, white privilege? Like, you know...?

**Michael:** Right. All of it. All of it. Like, I am a product of love. Period.

**Sabrina:** And that should... that's what should be important.

**Michael:** That is what is imp-- all of us are products of love. Some... Lord willing, all of us are products of love. And in that... like, that in itself gives us all merit to show up. That gives us the opportunity to, to stand and have a voice. And so, for me, like, my drag is entrenched in 100% acceptance and love, and how can I best serve someone else? But again, I, I'm a person that, outside of everything, I do my best not to... not to attune to labels. Like, I have to... and I, I love the fact that there are... there are classes that now go over this. Um, because it is. It’s important to some people.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** But at the end of the day, why is it important? Isn’t it more important that we just come together, and we create change? Why do we have to know what our origin is to do it?

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** 'Cause maybe our origin isn't meant to be our future. Like, and that is... like, for me, that's one of the biggest... the biggest, um, areas of conflict when I'm having to go to that space mentally, is I can't... I don't wanna look at how we're different.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** I want to look at how we're the same, and let's move forward with that.

**Sabrina:** Right. When I was little, like, in grade school and stuff, like, everybody used to give me a hard time 'cause, like, until my, my siblings' father left on my 15th birthday, I... he was my dad.

**Michael:** Okay.

**Sabrina:** He's who I always thought was my father. Then after, 'cause my mom went to get child support from him, they had her do [unclear] for me, and I found out he was not, like, my father.

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** You know, go figure, my mom was 16; she was a baby. But, like, growing up, kids always gave me a hard time. It's like, oh, you know, “Are you Mexican?” I'm like, "No, I'm, I'm white." Like, I don't understand why it matters anyway.

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** But, um, but he... I don't know what his father was, but he was redhead. [Laughs].

**Michael:** Right. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** But his mother is Mexican and Native American.

**Michael:** Okay.

**Sabrina:** So, I do have that little bit, you know? But, like, when I was little, I, I didn't know.

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** So, I was like, “Why are you asking me that?” Like, "Of course not," blah, blah, blah, you know? Like... and, you know, you always have that thing it’s like, oh Hispanic, non-Hispanic. I'm like, "Hmm, do I wanna put that on there? Maybe get," you know?

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** "This or that?" But I just always, like, identify just as white 'cause that's mostly what I am. That's... I don't know. But at the same sense in that... as, like, I am part... you know, all of these, these other, um, races. [Unclear] I was like, what is the word?

**Michael:** What is that [unclear]?

**Sabrina:** What is that word? [Laughs]

**Michael:** What is that...? [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** So, it's like, I can identify. Like, especially in the summertime...

**Michael:** [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** She, she bronzes beautiful. [Laughs]

**Michael:** I love it.

**Sabrina:** But, you know, I don't know. It's like I'm... I can make some good Mexican food.

**Michael:** [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** I don’t like refried beans. I don't like spicy. You know, like... [Laughs]

**Michael:** Love it.

**Sabrina:** I, I mean, I've never had it, like, quite as difficult, and, like, I can't understand the whole, um, quite mixed race, you know?

**Michael:** Mm-hmm. Yeah.

**Sabrina:** So, I'm just like... I don't know. I'm that same thing, like, you are who you are. It doesn't... it doesn't matter.

**Michael:** Exactly. Exactly.

**Sabrina:** Like...

**Michael:** You [unclear]]

**Sabrina:** I don't care what you are. If you're a trashy person, you’re a terri—you're a trashy person. If you're a good person, you're a good person. That's just how it should be.

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** No questions. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Some of us are just good people who've done bad things.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] That's fine too, that fine.

**Michael:** Okay, good. That made me happy. Tell me I’m okay!

**Sabrina:** As long as... as long as you’re not killing puppies, like...

**Michael:** No, no, not at all.

**Sabrina:** Everything else we can, kind of, eh, fine... [Laughs]

**Michael:** [Unclear], yeah. That one kitten. I’m kidding. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** It's like if it was a cat, maybe. I’m dog girl, so...

**Michael:** [Laughs] Same. Same.

**Sabrina:** I can show you my puppies then.

**Michael:** Yes.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Alright. That long-ass question, we’re good.

**Michael:** Good.

**Sabrina:** So, how do you define drag?

**Michael:** I think Ru said it best, like, when she said, “We were born naked, and the rest is drag.” Drag is what we put on as our shield to step out in the day, whether it is a police uniform, whether it is doctor scrubs, nurses’ scrubs, bartenders badge, whatever. Like, drag is what we put on to bring about our best life and how we feel we're bringing about our best life. For me, I am a chameleon of that art. I can... I can wear whatever to make whoever feel a certain way. 'Cause at the end of the day it all revolves around how you make someone else feel. So, hopefully, all drag uplifts another human. We both know that's not always the case. But the goal is that one finds their own strength and serenity inside their art.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. Yeah. I see how, like, there's so many different ways you can come about it, like.. 'cause we've... talk about that in class quite a lot.

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** It's like, I don't know, I describe it as, like, love. Like, you get to be who you are with no if ands or buts. Like, it's just you being able to... yeah, you, you are who you are. You get these families and, like, those are... those are families. You are family. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** You know? It's love, it's being able to express yourself, just be you.

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** What do you think is the purpose of drag? Kind of hit that too with the definition but...

**Michael:** Yeah. It’s, uh... I would... yeah, I would say they're pretty much one in the same, like, those answers are pretty much the same thing. The purpose... the purpose of anything is solely based upon with that individual makes it. Like, I could say the purpose of my new floors... so, it looks beautiful in here, while someone else says... the purpose, so I feel good. Like, what was the purpose?

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Yeah.

**Michael:** Like, it's all... it's all the same, it's all dependent upon what that individual sees as the purpose. So, I can’t... I can’t answer that for everyone. But for me, I think the overall purpose is to find myself.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. Oh, another sexual question.

**Michael:** Uh-huh, sex is everywhere.

**Sabrina:** What do you think drag is sexual? Why or why not? If so, how? In what way?

**Michael:** Do I think drag is sexual?

**Sabrina:** Do you...? It’s worded weird. Do you think drag is se-- do you think drag is sexual?

**Michael:** Okay.

**Sabrina:** Okay. I might have just said it a little messed up.

**Michael:** No, no, no, you’re good. You're good.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] I was like, "Wait, what?" I was... I was confused too afterwards, I'm like, "Ah...".

**Michael:** Like, ah, the wording.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Wording's hard, okay?

**Michael:** Oh yes, alright, yeah. I’m dyslexic. I understand. Um, uh, it can be. It can be very sexual. Again, it depends on what that person brings in.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Um, I... there was, was a time where I was looking for that type... kind of attention via drag. And it... no more. Period. But it's... like, it can be, let me just say that. Like, being a teacher can be sexual, right?

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** Being a donut maker can be sexual, like, "Better glaze that again," like...

**Sabrina:** I mean, there’s holes in the donut.

**Michael:** Oh! [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** They don't make costumes as teachers for nothing.

**Michael:** Oh, librarian, you. Like, it’s all... anything can be. That, that question’s so interesting. Is dog grooming sexual? It can be.

**Sabrina:** Like, "Oh, I like the way you caress that dog."

**Michael:** That mane. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] That just makes me think of, like, for the season of RuPaul, like, Nina?

**Michael:** Uh-huh. Nina Flowers, I love her.

**Sabrina:** No, not her. But I do... I love, love, love her. Um, Season 10 with Nina Bo’nina?

**Michael:** Oh, okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Sabrina:** 'Cause she comes out, she got these big ole hips, big ole tush, these big ole breastesses. You know, it's like, every single look she does is very sexual. Like, you, you got this girl but... [Laughs]

**Michael:** [Laughs] All of it.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Um, I mean, I feel like we should know the answer, how do you feel about RuPaul's Drag Race?

**Michael:** I... Well, I do have mixed feelings about it.

**Sabrina:** Okay.

**Michael:** So, first feeling is I do love how Ru has worked diligently to make us a household name and household product. Like, we, as, as an art form... you can't go into a house in America and not have fall... someone not know what drag is.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** Like, it's, it's a thing now. Um, and so, it’s done amazing for the community as a whole of giving us a spotlight.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Um, I think it's also done a detriment to our community, as in what's expected of entertainers.

**Sabrina:** I can see that.

**Michael:** Um, one of the hugest shifts and one of the, the biggest internal conflicts I have is the fact I cannot go into a space and truly be able to serve and feel comfortable and welcoming predominantly because people have attuned themselves... and especially new entertainers, attuned themselves to make it about them. When again, it has zero to do with me and has everything to do with who I'm serving. And I think that's one of the biggest frustrations I have, is we are expected now, as entertainers, to be catty, to be backstabbing, to be all of that. And that’s...

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** I refuse to be that. I have no time for that.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** And so, that... it's, it's a double-edged sword. Like, I'll... I'm glad I can have these conversations in open now with kids who are going to school to study it, like... I was buying heels in the back of a Goodwill, like, in... sneaking out the back door with them.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Right. Like, "Don't see me."

**Michael:** Like, oh... out of fear persecution. And now, it's... we can talk about it. So, I love that. I just wish there was more diversity in what's expected of us.

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** And so, yeah.

**Sabrina:** Yeah, it's very competition-based, very...

**Michael:** Yeah. There's no... there's no competition besides for you to you. Period.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. 'Cause at the end of the day, you are doing it for you and....

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. If you could change one thing about drag, the drag scene or the drag community what would it be and why?

**Michael:** It was just that.

**Sabrina:** Yup.

**Michael:** That exactly.

**Sabrina:** Two in one.

**Michael:** Yay! Mazel tov. [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] What do you think are misconceptions people have about drag? [Laughs]

**Michael:** Okay.

**Sabrina:** Where does it come from? What do you think would help change that?

**Michael:** Um, well you can't change anything without changing an entire species of man. Um...

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** It... I think one of the biggest things is that I do not want to be a woman. Like, that... that's, that's one of the biggest things when I talk to or meet people who've never met a queen or entertainer for the first time, and they're meeting me, and they're like, “So, do you like being a woman?” Like, oh God, no. This is expensive, and this is... like, this is time-consuming.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] Right.

**Michael:** I'd much rather be on my couch with a bag of chips right now, like, curled up, watching some scary movie with my dog. Like, that's, that's me. And so, um...

**Sabrina:** Right. I don't like being a woman either, if it helps.

**Michael:** You're welcome.

**Sabrina:** [Laughs]

**Michael:** I'm happy to be able to wash it off for you. So, it's, it's one of those things, like, I, I wish people, when they... when they look at an entertainer, they see the, the person. I, I wish that people would see the entertainer...

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** And not, not, like, superimpose what they feel that entertainer is or wants to be.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. I think that's one of the biggest issues with, like, any... you know, anybody that's different, you know? Being gay, being trans, doing drag, like, it’s like, “Oh well, this is what I think, so that's definitely what you have to think and feel, right?”

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina**: No. That's not how it works.

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** Like, for Ha--Halloween. Um, do you watch, like, American Horror Story?

**Michael:** Oh yeah, Love it.

**Sabrina:** Okay. So, they did the hotel one. So, my family, kind of, did that for Halloween. My stepdad dressed up as... what's the guy’s name? The man who was dressed in drag.

**Michael:** Okay.

**Sabrina:** So, my, my stepdad did that. My stepdad’s real straight. [Laughs]

**Michael:** I love it.

**Sabrina:** You know?

**Michael:** Love it.

**Sabrina:** Like, he did it for fun, you know?

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** He... my stepdad's also a very interesting character. [Laughs] He, he, he was feeling himself, he had his makeup on, you know, like. He... [Laughs] He... I don’t know, he... you know, it's like, "It's for you. You have fun with it."

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** Just don't impose anything, like, no, he... really, he's a very straight man.

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** He's... You... with my mom, you know, whatever, but...

**Michael:** [Laughs]

**Sabrina:** [Laughs] But I don't know, I just... I'm also very. very open.

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** So, I was like, just don't push yourself on other people. It's not right; it's not wrong.

**Michael:** I get it.

**Sabrina:** Let people be people.

**Michael:** Right.

**Sabrina:** Da-da-da... people... that's what we just said. Um, if you choose one thing you want people to know about or learn about drag, what would it be?

**Michael:** Ah. That it's not concrete. That there... no, no two humans can answer these questions the same way.

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** And it is... drag is something that must be experienced, and it must be... to fully understand it, it must be done. Um, because there is... there is a shift that happens within the individual that they feel the sense of power that they've never felt before. No matter how ridiculous they think they may be...

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:**- When they wash it off, they miss it. Hands down. Like, I've yet to meet someone that's like, “I would never do that again.” Like, when you wash it off, and you go back to you, it's that feeling that you're like, “Oh, I see.”

**Sabrina:** Right.

**Michael:** Does that make sense? Like...

**Sabrina:** Yeah.

**Michael:** There is... there is a... there is an energy shift that's just unremarkable.

**Sabrina:** Yeah. Like, I, I can slightly relate to that because of my dance experience, you know? It's like, it takes so much work, and it's so hard, but, like, at the end of the day, it's so much fun, and you can't wait to go do it again.

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Sabrina:** You know, it's like all the praise you get, all the attention you get, like, it's nice. [Laughs]

**Michael:** Yeah, exactly.

**Sabrina:** So...

**Michael:** So, the studio name, Effervescent Studios, uh, it comes from a friend of mine who... well, he would always come to the shows, regular attender, uh, he would say, “You're just so effervescent.” He was like, “Every time you take the stage, it was literally, like, refreshing.” He’s like, “Just like bubbles in champagne.” And so, the studio, kind of, inhabits that, that essence of that, that feeling you get when you're in drag. It's the effervescent freshness. Like, it's... no matter... again, no matter how ridiculous you may feel, once you take it off, the effervescence, you feel it's, it's dwindling after that. It's... that's, that's what I want. That's what I want to encompass in it.

**Sabrina:** That's great 'cause, as you said, I looked at your sign, and I see the bubbles.

**Michael:** Yeah. I was like, "That's what they are."

**Sabrina:** Like, it’s champagne! [Laughs]

**Michael:** You welcome! That's where they come from.

**Sabrina:** That's awesome.

**Michael:** Thank you.

**Sabrina:** Of course.

**Sabrina:** Well, thank you so much. I appreciate your time and everything and...

**Michael:** It's my pleasure.

**Sabrina:** Answering all my fun, silly questions.

**Michael:** Thank you, thank you.

**Sabrina:** Of course.

**Michael:** Yay!