Interview with Trina Diamond

To cite this particular interview, please use the following:  
Hurley, Amy. 2021. Interview with Trina Diamond. *Sociology of Drag, SIUE*, April 1. Available URL (https://ezratemko.com/drag/trina-diamond).

**Amy:** Okay, So, I have a list of lots of questions to ask. Some of them are more, like, general questions about drag in itself, and then some are more targeted towards your personal story with drag. So, I'm gonna go ahead and start off with the more general questions about drag. Um, so let me... okay, so, I'm just gonna go ahead and jump right in. Um, how do you define drag?

**Trina:** Um, to me, drag is any type of, um, expression. And it's really about freedom and being able to be yourself and, you know, not just putting on a wig and makeup. It's really just art.

**Amy:** Mm-hmm, absolutely. Awesome. And then, do you think... um, what do you think the purpose of drag is? Do you think that, kind of, goes into what you said about it's more than just dressing up?

**Trina:** Yeah, it's... I definitely feel that it's more than just dressing up. Um, it really allows you to, um, kind of, create this alter ego, where you get to live in a fantasy for, you know, a few short minutes, or however long your performance is. And it allows you to be creative and artistic. And, you know, even some of the most sensitive people, you know, who are super shy, you know, they get into their character, and it's like something just takes over them, and they're able to light up the stage and entertain and...

**Amy:** Awesome, awesome. Sorry, I'm, kind of, bad at, like, responding 'cause...

**Trina:** You're fine.

**Amy:** Drag is extremely new to me. Not extremely new, like, I've always known about it, but, like, I've only known about it through, like, social media.

**Trina:** Right.

**Amy:** So, like, taking this class, like, my mind...

**Trina:** [Laughs]

**Amy:** Is just so open to it, I'm like, "Whoa!" like... and I love it; it's an awesome class. So, like, a lot of this is just super new to me, but I love it.

**Trina:** Yeah.

**Amy:** Um, okay. Um, how do you feel about RuPaul's Drag Race?

**Trina:** Oh... [Laughter]

**Amy:** We're watching it in class right now, so...

**Trina:** So, I love the fact that it has really allowed drag to go mainstream. Um, and it's really giving, you know, these artists... it's giving them a chance to showcase their talent to millions and millions of people. Um, and they're able to live their dreams and make careers off of it.

Um, I definitely would like RuPaul to be more open-minded about the type of performers she allows, um, to be on the shows. Um, right now it's very, you know, centered around cismen. Um, this year, or this season, Season 13, um, is the first openly trans male, who is a female drag impersonator. Um, and I would like to see more of that. Um, RuPaul definitely has the platform that, you know, she could showcase a lot more talent, um, than, you know, just the... what people are used to...

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** As far as, you know, assigned male at birth performers dressing up like women.

**Amy:** Right, right, absolutely. I totally understand, Um, okay, if you could change one thing about drag, the drag scene or the drag community, what would it be and why?

**Trina:** Um, 100% it would be making drag shows more inclusive. Um, not just having your standard, um, type of drag queens in every show. Um, you know, there's a lot of, you know, assigned female at birth performers and nonbinary performers and, um, people of color that, you know, are incredibly talented, but don't... you know, they often get overlooked for, you know, the bigger shows and things like that.

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** So, um, there's definitely a lot... there's a lot of room for improvement. Um, but I do feel like it is getting better.

**Amy:** Awesome, awesome. Um, what do you think are misconceptions that people have about drag?

**Trina:** I think one of the biggest misconceptions, especially for, um, I would say the quote-unquote straight community, that, you know, is not really surrounded by, um, gay people in general, um, biggest misconception of drag is that drag queens are men who secretly wish they were women. You know? It... there's a huge difference, you know, between being transgender and being a drag performer. Just because, you know, we put on the wig, the makeup, and, you know, it's, it's art. It's not... um, it doesn't have anything to do with gender.

**Amy:** Right, right. Absolutely.Um,f you chose one thing you want people to know or learn about drag, what would that be?

**Trina:** Um, drag is art. Drag is, you know, not just... it's not just putting on a wig and makeup. It's, you know, that... creating that alter ego and going on stage and entertaining people. Um, it doesn't have to be your standard, you know, what you see on RuPaul's Drag Race. Um, there's, there's a huge umbrella of artistry that is under the term drag that, um... I like the fact that, you know, they're finally showcasing that.

**Amy:** Right. Absolutely. Um, okay, so, these questions are more targeted towards, kind of, like your personal experience with drag. Um, so, when did you first hear about drag, and what was your initial reaction to it?

**Trina:** I first heard about drag... gosh this... probably would have been... I was like 15 or 16. And just, um, like, being in high school, um, I had friends that, you know, had older siblings that were in the bar scene. Um, and as I started getting into my adulthood, like 18, 19, um, that was my first experience with drag. Um, not to put my age out there, but... [laughs]

**Amy:** [Laughs]

**Trina:** Not to age myself, but the internet started being more, um, useful as far as social media. The Myspace days were rolling around. Um, it wasn't just AIM chat anymore.

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** Um, and so, that, that's, kind of, where I started getting exposed. And then, as I started getting into adulthood, I was like, "Oh my god, like, this is... we have this right here in my own hometown and, you know, had no idea. And thankfully, with social media, um, it's a lot more accessible to younger people who, you know, they can't go to bars. And, you know, now we're moving into the direction where we're doing, you know, dinner shows and all-age brunch shows and... Um, so, it's it's definitely a lot easier to be exposed to it nowadays than, that the mid-2000s when...

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** I was, kind of, coming into, um, you know, my own sexuality and, um, just finding out a lot more about, you know, the gay culture and drag and how it all started and...

**Amy:** Right. Okay.

**Trina:** Sorry, I'm a rambler.

**Amy:** Oh my gosh, no, the more the better.

**Trina:** [Laughs]

**Amy:** Trust me. Like, even aside from my class, I love learning about this stuff. Like, it seems like a whole new world to me, 'cause, like, I grew up in small-town Illinois, so, like, this just... I really didn't really hear much about drag at all, unless it was through social media. And I was like, well, I, I wanna know more but there's no opportunity to learn about it. So then, I saw this class, and I was like, "Oh, yes!" Like, finally, I can learn about it. So, trust me, the more the better. I love learning about it.Um, okay, when did you start performing as a drag artist, and why did you start performing?

**Trina:** So, I started performing in 2014. My now drag mother, um, there was a bar in Des Moines called Le Boi Bar. And it was, kind of, centered off of RuPaul's Drag Race. Um, there was a competition called Tyona's Drag Race. And, um, very similar concept. It was just for our little... um, our town. And, um, with a bunch of, like, local artists. And, um, one of the entertainers that was competing in the competition, um, there was this competition where they had to put people who don't do drag in drag. Um, and then, we, basically, had to, like, put on a show and, like, do a performance. And that was the first time I had ever actually performed in drag. And, um, it was supposed to just be a one-time thing. And, um, caught the bug...

**Amy:** Oh!

**Trina:** And [laughs] **i**t was all down and up [unclear].

**Amy:** [Laughs] That's so fun. So, where was that at again? It was your hometown?

**Trina:** Yeah, in Des Moines, Iowa.

**Amy:** Gotcha, gotcha, So, like, did you... so, was it, like, fun? Did you have a good time doing it?

**Trina:** Yeah. And, it was... it was such a blast. And, um, I... and that's, kind of, where I was going back to, like, the whole, like, um, you know, being, kind of, shy. I was never really, like, a shy person, but I do have, um, a lot of, like, social anxiety.

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** Um, and, you know, just being in front of people... um, I was never good at, like, public speaking. Um, before doing drag, I never would have been able to do, like, an interview like this. And then, um, it really taught me how to, um, be in front of a large crowd and, and just entertain and talk and...

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** Um, all of those things. So, drag definitely is the reason why I'm able to... you know, I can stand in a crowd of 100,000 people and just talk, talk, talk...

**Amy:** Yeah.

**Trina:** And it’s totally fine.

**Amy:** That's awesome. I can tell... like, you're ve—I, like, noticed this from the get-go, you're very well-spoken. I'm jealous, 'cause I am...

**Trina;** [Laughs]

**Amy:** I need to practice drag or something because I need to get better at that. I get anxious too, and, like... [unclear] I don't get anxious in situations like this, but I can just tell, like, you are very well-spoken, and I'm so jealous. [Laughs]

**Trina:** Thank you. It just comes with practice. You just...

**Amy:** Right, right. Okay. Um, how did your family, friends, and other loved ones receive you becoming a drag artist?

**Trina:** Um, I think... and it always seems like everybody has similar stories, you know? It's harder for the male figures in your life, um, just, just being, you know, gay, trans, nonbinary, things like that. Um, it always seems like it's harder for, like, your dad and...

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** Uh, people like that. Um, my mom was very receptive from the get-go. Um, and, you know, the rest of my family, like, was completely fine. And I am thankful that I have had a very good experience, 'cause I know a lot of people, you know, they don't have, you know, the support system, um, and things like that.

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** So, for me personally, yeah, um, it was... my family took it just fine. They come to my shows.

**Amy:** Good. That's awesome. I'm so happy to hear that.Um, where does your drag name come from?

**Trina:** Um, so, Trina Diamond is my drag name. Trina, um, is a rapper...

**Amy:** Mm-hmm.

**Trina:** Um, and literally one of my favorites. But back then, um, before I even started doing drag, she was always one of my favorite artists. And, um, I would listen obsessively, and anytime we'd go to a party, I'd be putting on a Trina song, and it just... it hypes you up, and you're just ready to rage. And, um, so, my friends were already calling me Trina, um, just because I was so obsessed with her as an artist. And so, when I decided that I was gonna do drag, I was like, "Well, obviously, you know, people already call me Trina, so it's a natural fit."

And, um... and then, so, in the drag community, you have, like, drag families. Um, and the first family when I first started, the person who put me in drag, um, their last name was Michaels. And so, I was Trina Michaels. And then, my current drag mom is Tyona Diamond, um, and she was the one who ran the competition show, and just from, like, my growth, um, doing... I actually went back and competed for Season 2 of that competition, and, um, I did well, and she saw the potential in me, and then I became Trina Diamond.

**Amy:** Awesome. I love it. I absolutely love it. Okay. There are a lot of terms for types and styles of drags, from drag queen and drag king, to glamor queen, male impersonator, comedy queen, bearded queen, queen artist, bioqueen, and camp queen, among others. Are there particular labels you would use to characterize your drag? And what kind of drag do you do?

**Trina:** So, yeah. And there, there are all of those terms. And, um, nowadays, you know, there's a big push, um, because drag is about art. And we have really been wanting to showcase it as that. So, there is a push right now to, um, you know, focus more on, you know, the terminology of drag performer or drag artist, um, because it really is an umbrella term. You don't have to be a cis male to do drag. Um, but, you know, obviously everybody is... they can, you know, use the labels that, um, that they wish.

And, um, for me, personally, my style of drag is more female impersonator. Um, when I am performing, I want you to look at me and be like, "Damn, that's a whole-ass woman on stage right now."

**Amy:** Mm-hmm.

**Trina:** Um,and so that's... you know, I don't do, like, the big eyebrows and over-exaggeration and things like that, um, which I love that style of drag, but for me, personally, I prefer the more, uh, female impersonator style of drag.

**Amy:** Right. Awesome. Does the... oh, does the type of sty-- or does the type of drag that you do affect your life as a drag artist?

**Trina:** Um, not really so much.

**Amy:** Mm-hmm.

**Trina:** Um, my life has definitely, at this point, you know, with the years I've been doing drag and, um, you know, developing and growing as an entertainer, um, my personality’s pretty much the same, whether I'm in drag, out of drag. It's not so much that I'm having to create an alter ego anymore. Um, so, it's all just very intertwined.

**Amy:** Gotcha, gotcha. Who or what has influenced your drag?

**Trina:** Um, I would definitely say my drag mother, Tyona Diamond, um, literally one of the most stunning drag queens, um, I've ever met. Um, and, you know, nowadays, it's like, the younger generation is what keeps me pushing and wanting to do more and grow. Um, I really stopped looking at the... you know, I love learning about drag and the gay community and things like that from the older generation but it really is the young queens that are popping out and slaying the game. Um, that's who I look for for inspiration and ideas and motivation to want to keep going. And, you know, they look up to me, you know, being a little older and having the years of experience. So, yeah, definitely would say the younger generation.

**Amy:** Awesome. Um, do you consider your drag political? Why or why not?

**Trina:** I... Not necessarily in the performances itself. But, I do - as I've been growing a quote-unquote fanbase or followers and things like that, um, with social media, um, I, I've always been an opinionated person. Um, so, I wouldn't consider myself, like, a social justice lawyer, um, but, you know, when it comes to, like, Black Lives Matter and, um, LGBTQ rights and things like that, um, I, I'm very opinionated. [Laughs]

**Amy:** Right, right. As you should be.

**Trina:** And I don't, like... it's not like that's my goal. Uh, I'm not... it's, it's not my... it's not the purpose of me doing drag, per se. Um, it just so happens that I'm a very opinionated person, and I have somewhat of a platform and it is what it is.

**Amy:** Right. Absolutely. I totally understand. Um... okay, so, this one's more of, like, a broader question. It says, "Can you talk about what your life is like as a drag artist?" And then, there's other questions, things you can pinpoint. Um, are you part of a drag family, which we, kind of, hit on. Um, how often do you perform? What goes into getting ready for a performance? What are some challenges of doing drag, um, is there... and is there anything unique to the drag scene where you live compared to other places in the country or the world?

**Trina:** Yeah. So, I would... I'll start with, um, what I feel is unique about our drag scene here.

**Amy:** Mm-hmm.

**Trina:** Um, we're very open and welcoming. We're... you know, at least, here, in Iowa, I'll focus specifically more on Des Moines but it... you know, it goes into Iowa City and, um, Cedar Rapids, um, and we have a bunch of, like, smaller towns that are even starting to do drag shows at their local bars. Um, we're not... it's not as cliquey as I feel like, um, a lot of other scenes are in different, uh, cities, um, especially larger cities. You know, Des Moines' not a tiny town, but, um, so...

And knowing you have your... you have your groups that they just click better together. But, um, you know, we booked different styles of drag. Um, it's not so focused on what you would see on RuPauls' Drag Race, you know? We have artists who are magicians, and they go onstage... or, you know, live singers. Um, so it's, it's a very open community and very welcoming.

Um, I would als-- as far as, um, what I do, um, I am... I work for the Garden NightClub. Um, we're in the middle of transitioning to a new building right now. Um, I am the show director of the, um, Black... it's... it was Black Opulence with the former person, um, but I'm switching the focus to a decadence show where it will showcase, um, artists for... from different, um, perspectives, not just Black performers, but people of color in general - Asians, Hispanics, Black people, people of color in general. And so, I will be the show director for that show, specifically.

Um, and then, you know, performing on... so, that will be every Sunday or every second Sunday. And then, just performing on Fridays and Saturdays throughout the month. I also perform at the Blazing Saddle. I'm still part of their Black Opulence shows. Um, as far as... sorry, I'm jumbling because I'm thinking of the questions as I'm speaking.

**Amy:** No, go for it. [Laughs]

Trina: [Laughs] Um, as far as what it takes to get ready, um, it doesn't take me as long nowadays. I would say about an hour and a half. Just getting in the mindset that I got to put on makeup, and then put on tights and hip pads and figure out what outfits I'm gonna do and what songs I want to perform and things like that. So, I would say the whole process is about... for me, about six hours.

**Amy:** Oh wow.

**Trina:** Just getting in the mindset, um, figuring out the outfits, the songs. Um, you know, if I'm hosting that night, um, going through the, um, the lineup, who's performing? Um, making sure that... um, you know, 'cause when you're on the microphone, nobody wants to hear you just standing up there saying, "Coming up next to the stage..."So, you know, it's nice to know who is in the show with you, um, so that way, you know, you can, kind of, banter back and forth, and, um, talk about the artist. And, um, yeah, so the whole process is about six hours...

**Amy:** Exactly.

**Trina:** Um, to do, you know, 10-15 minutes' worth of drag. [Laughs]

**Amy:** Right. That is crazy. Is it...?

**Trina:** Um, but a big... but a big thing for me is, I like to be ready an hour or two before the show starts, so that way I can go mingle with the crowd, um, the other patrons in the bar, um, to try and get them pumped up for the show and...

**Amy:** Right. Can it be...? This is a personal question of mine, 'cause that is... I'm, like, thinking of myself getting ready. Obviously, I'm not getting ready for a show, but, like, I... once I hit an hour, I'm like, "Oh, I'm done. I don't care what I look like." Like, do you like that it takes a long time to get ready? Or are there some days where it's just like, uh, like, it can feel more like a chore?

**Trina:** Uh, oh yeah, definitely, definitely done a lot of shows where, um, it felt more like a chore. Um, and usually, on those nights, um, the focus is more on, let's just get a quick mug on. And, um, the nice thing about doing drag is, you know, I always try and do, like, fresh numbers and things like that. Um, but usually, you know, once you start learning songs, um, if you are having an off night, I'm like, "You know what, I haven't performed this in a couple of months. I'm gonna pull out a couple of old numbers and, uh, just make it a fun, light night.

**Amy:** Mm-hmm. Gotcha, gotcha. Okay. Um, what has the COVID-19 pandemic meant for your life as a drag artist?

**Trina:** Um, so with COVID, I personally, um... I just took a step back from drag. Our bars were closed down. Sorry if you can hear my Roomba going off. I don't want turn [overtalking].

**Amy:** No, you're fine. [Laughs]

**Trina:** [Laughs] Um, I, kind of, took a step back. I mean, the bars were closed, and even when the bars first started opening back up... I think they were closed for about three months, majority of summer for sure. Um, once bars started opening back up, um, I just wasn't really interested in, um, performing. I had, kind of... you know we had gone so long where I was, you know, show, show, show, nothing.

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** And, um, during that time, I kinda just lost the motivation to do it. And, um, you know, obviously, we're in the middle of a pandemic, so it just wasn't an option. Um, other artists, the local bars here, virtual shows started becoming extremely popular. Um, and I toyed around with the idea of doing virtual shows, um, and instead, me and my old roommate... my old roommate was doing virtual shows. And so, I, I had just, kind of, come to the decision that I didn't wanna personally do the virtual shows. And so, I became more of a... we're gonna turn the house into a stage, um, you know, and our close friends, um, that were performers, were like, "They can come over and perform on the deck. I'll help record and set up sound." And so, I came... more of like a... like a backstage-type person. Um, and I was completely fine with that.

**Amy:** Good.

**Trina:** I... but I just had no interest in performing. [Laughs]

**Amy:** Right. Is it still, like, kind of a...? 'Cause I know, like, uh, even just drag aside, I know a lot of people have been feeling that low motivation kind of thing for the past, like, year to year and a half. Has is slowly... has that motivation slowly started to come back, or is it still kinda lingering a little?

**Trina:** I would say New Year's was weirdly a reset for me. That's when I was like, "Okay, I'm back in the headspace, drag, drag, drag, drag." And so, now I'm back to doing shows again. And, um, I honestly feel like the reset helped me fall back in love with drag where it's no longer a chore to go out and perform, um, it's that I actually want to. And so, I'm actually really happy about that.

**Amy:** Good.

**Trina:** Um,my mind's... my state of mind has, kind of, reset with COVID and... yeah. But we're getting back in action; more people are getting vaccinated, so...

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** It's nice to see bars and entertainment, entertainment venues in general, um, being able to bring drag back.

**Amy:** Right. Oh, it's like a breath of fresh air. Things are finally starting to feel normal again.

**Trina:** Right. [Laughs]

**Amy:** Um, **s**orry, my dog is barking like crazy. I’m so sorry.

**Trina:** No, you're fine. You're fine.

**Amy:** Um, let's see. How do you identify in terms of your sex, gender identity, and gender expression out of drag?

**Trina:** So, I identify as gender nonconforming. Um, I... I'm gonna watch how I say this.

**Amy:** Mm-hmm.

**Trina:** It's a very personal thing for me.

**Amy:** Sure.

**Trina:** Um, I would say I identify as gender nonconforming, um, or male. [Laughs]

**Amy:** Mm-hmm, yeah.

**Trina:** Like, like, I, obviously... I wear nails...

**Amy:** Oh, love 'em.

**Trina:** I do drag. Just... I don't really think about my gender a lot. Um, but I would say gender nonconforming. I can switch it up, um, depending on how I'm presenting. Um, but I just... I don't really care for the labels.

**Amy:** Sure.

**Trina:** Um, so, for me, personally, um, that is the best way that I could identify.

**Amy:** Sure, absolutely. Um, how... I'm sorry, I'm gonna step out and calm down my dog down.

**Trina:** Okay, right.

**Amy:** She's going crazy. Give me one second.

**Trina:** [Laughs] You're okay.

[Silence from 00:29:40 to 00:30:19]

**Amy:** Oh, sorry. She was barking at a squirrel.

**Trina:** No worries.

**Amy:** Oh. [laughs] Okay. Um, oh, where did it go? Okay. Um, how has drag, um, if it has, has drag influenced your sex and gender identities?

**Trina:** Mm, I definitely feel like drag... it allows you to, kind of, play around and, um... you know, a lot of people... even just, you know, being trans or nonbinary, um, it allows you to really toy around with, um, drag by per—performing and putting on the wig and the makeup and things like that. Um, I personally feel like it makes it easier to transition and, kind of, come out, you know, as, you know, gender nonconforming or transgender, um, or nonbinary, um, where you don't have to... I feel like it, kind of, takes away the shock...

**Amy:** Mm-hmm.

**Trina:** Um, you know, when you are, you know, a drag artist, um, and, you know, you start... I wouldn't say, like, it really has anything to do with your sexuality, but, you know, your gender, for sure. Um, you know, it kinda helps you feel more comfortable, um, when your friends and family, you know, they're already getting a taste of you, you know, putting on the wig and the makeup, it, it becomes more normal for them. And I feel like it's less shocking to them, you know, if you do, you know, decide to come out as trans or nonbinary or gender nonconforming or, um, really, anything else. Um, for me, personally, I feel like it makes it easier.

**Amy:** Gotcha, gotcha. Um, has drag influenced how you think about gender?

**Trina:** I would say that, um, in the beginning, no. But, as I'm learning about, you know, new terminology and, um, you know... god, when I first came out, this was in the mid to late 2000s, you know, you never heard of nonbinary or gender nonconforming. Um, but, you know, being in the scene and doing drag, um, I definitely think that it has helped start the conversations of, you know, hey, you know, I don't really feel like a boy, but maybe I also don't feel like a woman or... you know? [Laughs]

**Amy:** Mm-hmm.Right.

**Trina:** I,I think that it has, um, opened up the conversation with the different styles of drag that people do. Um, it allows for more people to showcase, you know, who they are a lot easier.

**Amy:** Right. Gotcha. Um, have your sex and gender identities influenced your drag?

**Trina:** No.

**Amy:** Gotcha. [Laughs] Straight to the point, no. [Laughs]

**Trina:** Right. [Laughs]

**Amy:** Um, let's see. How has drag impacted or changed you in any way?

**Trina:** I would say it, it's allowed me to be more vocal and find my voice. And, um, you know, kind of going back to the whole soc-- social anxiety thing, um, it's really allowed me to develop those skills that I use in my everyday life. And even, you know, with my... with my career outside of drag, um, you know, being a people leader, um, it's helped me develop those skills that I probably never would have developed. I certainly didn't develop them going to school. [Laughs]

**Amy:** Mm-hmm. Right.

**Trina:** Um, speech class did nothing for me. [Laughs]

**Amy:** Right. Oh, I can relate. Oh. Um, let's see. Has drag imp-- impacted your confidence as a person when you are out of drag?

**Trina:** Oh, 100%. Um, I would say that doing drag... and I feel like it's a... it's that way for a lot of people that I know, um, that by doing drag, you're... it's, kind of, like, you're able to get your name out there, and it's the recognition, it's the... you know, when you go out, um, even people that you're like, "I've never met you in my life," um, they're like, "Oh my god!" and things like that. And it, kind of, allows you to be like a little, mini-celebrity even in, like, in your little hometown.

**Amy:** Sure.

**Trina:** Um, just like any other type of art would do that, you know... but with drag you don't have to, you know, be a good singer, you don't have to, um, be what you would consider the normal ways of becoming quote-unquote famous.

**Amy:** Right, right.Okay. Um, I think this one is the last one. It's a bit longer. It says, I'm curious if and how your social identities have impacted your experience of drag or vice versa. Um, can you share about how one or more of your social identities such as gender, race, class, age, etc., um, or the interaction of these social identities have impacted your experience of drag?

**Trina:** Yeah. Um, just being a person of color even, um... I have personally, as well as, um, you know, with, um... we have, like, um... it's called Iowa Black Drag Council. And, um, last year, especially with the Black Lives Matter movement and things like that going on, we've really been pushing for, you know, bars to, um, have more diverse casts, um, and not just your standard cis white male performers, um, and not just poor people of color but for people with different gender identities, um, you know, nonbinary performers, trans performers, um, just really holding bars and event venues, um, accountable for, you know, being more diverse.

**Amy:** Exactly.

**Trina:** And, um, it is the way it should be; it's the way of the future. Um, there is more to drag than just cis white male artists, wh-- they deserve a platform, for sure, um, and nobody’s trying to take that away from them. Um, but, you know, there's more to drag than just a cis white male...

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** That puts on a wig. And, um, you know, at least the bars here locally have been doing a really good job at making sure that, you know, the shows are more inclusive and that they're, you know, giving space to, um, all performers and all types of performers. And, um, I really feel like it's really... it's really brought in a new crowd to come and see the shows as well. Um, you know, they're not just coming to see, you know, that stereotypical drag show. They're coming to a show, and not even realizing that, you know, the next person on stage is a magician who is gonna pull, you know, birds out of a hat, um...

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** And just different styles of drag. Um, I really think that it's, it's been a breath of fresh air in the drag world and, um, you know, even other bars, you know... I did a show, um, last year in Ottumwa, Iowa. It's a small town, mostly Republican, um, where, you know, you just would never think that there'd be a sold-out drag show with 300 people.

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** Um, it was the year before. I forget last year happened. Thanks, COVID. [Laughs]

**Amy:** Yeah. [Laughs]

**Trina:** Um,but, yeah, and it was sold out, and they loved it. And, um, so, yeah, I, I think drag is becoming more acceptable, and it's becoming, um, more mainstream. And, um, now is the perfect time to, you know, start showing the more diverse drag. And I also think that it helps fight the stereotypes, you know, when you're having a diverse cast. Um, it help... it helps fight the stereotype that, oh, you do drag because you secretly wanna be a woman.

**Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** Um, by showing the different talents in that drag is more than just putting on a wig and makeup, um, it's really helping us show the world that it's really about the art form, not necessarily because, you know, we don't identify as, you know, cis, basically.

**Amy:** Mm-hmm. Right. Well, that is all the questions I have. I really appreciate you doing this and answering all my questions.

**Trina:** Yeah, no worries.

**Amy:** It was so fun. This is all just so interesting to me.

**Trina: Amy:** Right.

**Trina:** [Laughs]

**Amy:** I wish... I wish this class could last, like, all year, I feel like we're just smushing too much in such a small amount of time. I wanna know more. But I really appreciate it, especially with such a last-minute notice. I really appreciate it. And it was so awesome to meet you.

**Trina:** No worries. Nice to meet you as well, and good luck.

**Amy:** Thank you. Have a good day.

**Trina:** Thanks. You too.

**Amy:** Bye bye.

**Trina:** Bye.