



WAKE

UP

I WAS BORN IN LONDON...

OLIVIA AMBE




...BUT I AM CAMEROONIAN AND IRISH.



Heaven...

Last night was our first time in a gay club and the first stop was the G-A-Y bar in Soho. G-A-Y was pretty typical; a busy bar, pop music and an extra long queue for the smoking area. We had a couple of drinks and a dance before we decided to leave and as we grabbed our coats, the cloakroom guy said “Heading to Heaven? You’re late!” What was he talking about? We had to know. Our night had been pretty normal up until we saw a sea of people whose leader was a glammed up Drag Queen and that was our decision made; follow them. Head to toe in pink and glitter, she led us through London’s roads like they were her runway. And damn right, she owned it like nobody’s business.

As we walked into heaven, we realised that our night had just begun.



Walking into Heaven was like walking into something make-believe. Here you could enjoy yourself free from judgement, and really express who you were born to be. The flashing strobe lights glistening on the stone walls, and the blown-up condoms floating through mid-air created a carnival experience with a small space. With the power anthems thumping through the speakers, everyone was able to embrace their inner dance queen and perform to their heart’s content. We saw dance moves that are usually kept behind closed bedroom doors with men and women spiralling out of control and yet, not at any point did it feel cramped or suffocating. This small, underground club became a place of fantasy where dreams can come true and rainbow glitter appears to be in every single shot.

The magic wasn’t just contained on the dancefloor or at the bar, it continued into the gender-neutral toilets. This pristine

bathroom with wooden cubicles and bold vibrant colours painted everywhere was everything I expected from a genderless bathroom, and more. I’m so glad that in 2019 we’re not only experiencing unisex toilets, but also CLEAN unisex toilets. What a time to be alive! Rarely do I experience a clean bathroom on a night out, so this was a luxury in its self. 2019 I love you, you’re doing great.

And then came along the moment we had been waiting for, “G-A-Y Porn Idol”. Oh boy was this a treat. The confidence oozing from the stage as men and women of all ages, colours and sizes strutted their way on to the stage, claiming the stripper pole for their own and removing every last piece of their outfit right in front of us all. Never have a seen such courage from complete strangers. It was truly inspiring to watch as a 19-year-old girl revealed all as if this was a regular Thursday night out for her. No one judged anyone as the crowd was enthralled

... is a place on Earth

I Popped My Drag Queen Cherry

by each performance, stamping feet and wolf-whistling, egging each seductive act on. The body-confidence on stage and the supportive cheers from the dance floor were heart-warming. Heaven is truly a magical place where everyone is accepted and we need more places like this in our world.

As the night drew to a close, the main judge of the Porn Idol event, Trinity The Tuck, came out to show us how it is really done. Her

pink, glittery bodysuit sent sparkles flying all over the club, while her extremely extra hairflips gave me neck ache just watching her. The electricity sizzling out of every last inch of her body as she twisted and turned with every beat of the music was incredible and I felt like I never wanted to leave. I have never been so overwhelmed with awe and inspiration as I watched my first ever live drag performance surrounded by half naked gays and lube-coated condoms.

Words by Lara Brent



Last Night...

...was the first time I had walked into a club and felt no judgement whatsoever because the reality was, no cared about what you looked like or who you were with. They were there to have a good time and live their best life; everyone had the same intentions, we just wanted to dance.

The main dance floor was packed. I mean, spilling out the sides of the arched doorways packed. So, we prepared to down our drinks before we tried to weave our way through. Usually you would get an eccentric dancer nudge the drink out of your hand or an elbow to your side but, this was the weird bit, there was no pushing or shoving to get through. It was like the sea had parted; everyone was careful and respectful of each other.

We danced the night away to the DJ's perfectly balanced playlist of old and new R&B; it was clear the crowd liked the classic Rihanna hits more than anything. 'Don't Stop The Music' blasted through the surround sound and as the beams changed from pink to blue to purple, balloons began to fall from the ceiling. Now this is a party! Little did I know, as the crowd went wild patting the balloons across our heads, is that they were blown up condoms. Yes condoms, and they were huge.

I bent down to see what I was stepping on and no sooner did I realise the amount of ripped condom wrappers that layered the floor. At that moment, I overheard someone say, "Don't let the lube get in my hair!"

It was getting to 2am and Trinity the Tuck was arriving fashionably late, so we took a quick detour to the gender-neutral toilets. With the huge crowd that was queuing to get into Heaven, I was surprised that these toilets were the complete opposite. There was little to no queue and the best part was that it was the cleanest club toilet I have ever been in. There was no wet toilet paper on the floor or any spillage, the toilet paper was where it should be, dry and in the dispenser – I have never seen that before.

We heard a voice on the mic introducing Trinity the Tuck and bolted to the main stage. The crowd was going crazy for RuPaul's Drag Race Winner of Season 4 and I could see why; her personality emanated the room and the whole crowd was in awe. She was here to judge the competition, Porn Idol. We didn't know what we were getting ourselves into, other than the fact the word 'porn' was in the title. And let's just say, we needed a couple more drinks in our system before

seeing this. Members of the crowd competed to win the chance to become Trinity's back-up dancer in the final performance.

Each person made their way onto the stage and gave it their all, stripping to the beat of the music and swinging round the pole like nobody was watching. 19-year-old, Natalie, made her way on stage and although slightly shy, she did a great performance. Everyone cheered her on as she walked around the pole still clinging onto her coat that she barely took off. Her only comment from Trinity was "Show us your tits, they're great!" and suddenly her confidence grew and the jacket dropped to the floor. As much as I was out of my comfort zone, I realised that this stage

was a stepping stone for them and cheering each contestant on made it that little bit easier for them to be themselves. All the contestants owned the stage and captivated the audience with their pole dancing moves but, my main thought was "do they sanitise this pole after each person?" No, they don't.

I couldn't have picked a better person to take my drag performance virginity; it left me in awe and wanting to see more. From the dance moves, the hair flicks and the platform heels, right up to the well-deserved back-up dancer who was strutting his stuff (literally). Everything was as Trinity The Tuck said that night, FABULOUS. I couldn't agree more.

Words by Veronica Wong Diffa



I Popped My Drag Queen Cherry

