

TALKIN' TRASH

TINA C RECKONS SHE'S JUST A SIMPLE COUNTRY GIRL FROM, WELL, TENNESSEE. HER ALBUMS INCLUDE *COMPLETE AND UTTER COUNTRY* AND *NO DICK'S AS HARD AS MY LIFE*. RUMOUR HAS IT THAT SHE'S REALLY A GAY MALE COMEDIAN FROM THE UK AND HER NEW SHOW, *THE TWIN TOWERS TRIBUTE* HAS BEEN GENERATING SOME CONTROVERSY, BEING DESCRIBED AS "IN POOR TASTE". NEVERTHELESS IT WAS THE HIT OF THE EDINBURGH COMEDY FESTIVAL AND IS ABOUT TO TOUR AUSTRALIA.

INTERVIEW BY MATTHEW MYERS

Tell us about your Twin Towers show.

I wanted to make my own personal tribute, so I put together an album called 9-11-24-7. You know, if a loved one has been involved in a terrorist attack – that's sad. People don't realise just how sad that is!

You've written over 40 country and western songs. Do you have a favourite?

My new album is called *I Didn't Know I Had It In Me*. I'm real proud of that song. I don't know if you can relate to this one but my new single is called *Other Guys Love Parts Of Me, But You Love Me Whole* and I think that's a beautiful sentiment.

Are you looking forward to returning to Australia?

Oh, sure. I'm in the UK at the moment but I have to be promiscuous here and say I love Australia more. I just love it! I really mean it!

Apparently you were impressed by the lifesavers at Bondi.

I see people like that and I think THANK YOU for doing that! Thank you for reaching the peak of physical perfection. I may reach perfection with my voice, but they have done it with their bodies and I thank God for them!

You grew up with 17 brothers and sisters in Open Throat Holler, Tennessee. What was that like?

That gave me a strong perspective from which to see the world. Yeah, we didn't have a lot of money and we didn't have no fancy cars or nothin' – but we had a big refrigerator. You know, I didn't speak to my daddy for five years before he died – don't judge me, you don't know me! Okay?

Did you live in a trailer park?

No. I know what you're thinking! You're thinking Sissy Spacek!

Your band is called White Trash.

Oh yes, and I'm reclaiming that phrase. You queer folk, no offence, did it with 'queer'. And I think I can reclaim 'white trash'. Because it's nothing to do with skin colour or nothin.' It is a state of mind.

Let's talk divas. First up: Dolly Parton.

Oh my God! Dolly is the most intelligent woman in any musical form. I think anybody who doesn't own her last three albums just doesn't like music.

Tina Turner.

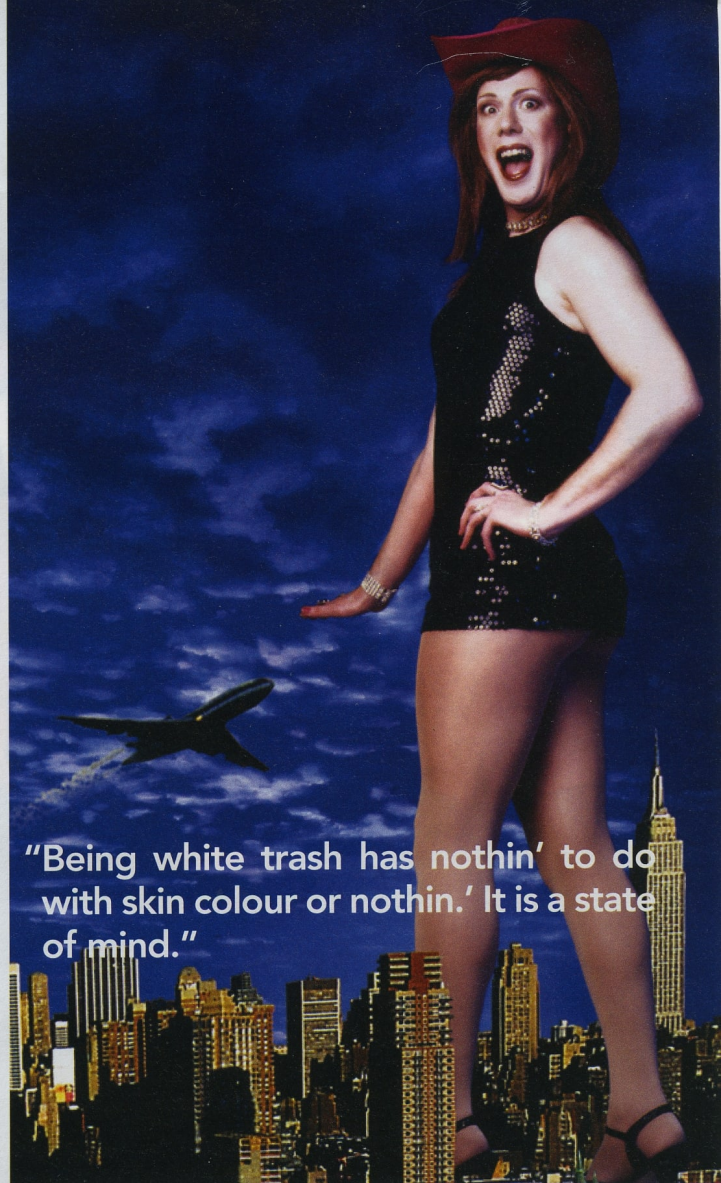
Tina is an inspiration to me personally, obviously for leg reasons.

Cher.

I was privileged to see Cher in Las Vegas and I had a seat that was to the side of the stage and I could see into her quick-change dressing room. Oh my God! The respect I have for that woman. We're talking full wig, costume, make-up and she'd change inside of thirty seconds.

Madonna.

I had a well-publicised problem with Madonna around the time she was going through that whole western-style thing. The whole *Music* thing, and I thought she was kind of plundering my culture, and I would never do that! When I did my Bollywood album, for example, I really thought hard and long about how I appropriated that ancient and mystical culture into my three-minute pop songs.



Tina C with the world at her feet – and lookin' up her dress!

Kylie.

Oh my God, she is like your greatest export. I think it's real hard that Dannii is having to do all the hard work for Kylie. You know, Kylie does all the sexy flirting and Dannii has to get down and... you know what I'm saying? Have you heard about all this? C'mon!

Agnetha and Frida.

They kind of passed me by when I was growing up but I just love that whole ABBA thing now. I love the fact that they are the perfect dichotomy of womanhood. You have the blonde and the redhead: polar opposites. The virgin and the whore. Of course, I see myself much more as a Frida with the whole redhead thing.

Dame Edna.

Oh my God! I love comedy. I'd love to be able to tell a joke, but I don't do jokes. I have such respect for her.

Of course, it's really Barry Humphries.

That's right, yeah. I think it's kinda strange pretending to be other people. I think it's kind of a weird thing to do. I don't wish to criticise the guy. I better stay out of it.

Monica Lewinsky.

What woman doesn't dry clean?

Finally, if you were invited to Buckingham Palace to meet the Queen, what would you say to her?

Oh God. I know you think of me as some sort of remote super-cool person, but I would gush and be so embarrassed. I would just start talking and never stop, do you know what I'm saying to you? These people are old, you know, they have a history – who knew about that? But I hear she's real boring. I suppose the one good thing is that we would never be wearing matching outfits! 🍷