



**Episode #07: Drag Kings, Drag Pageants
and Vogue Magazine with Ivory Onyx**

SHOW NOTES



**“Even though they may not know it, the crowd has always been my therapy”
-Ivory Onyx**

INTRO

Two words: Drag Kings. Yep, this is THE episode everyone’s been asking about and it’s finally here! In this episode, I talk with Ivory Onyx who’s not only a highly decorated drag king but has been in the business for over 20 years. He was one of the kings to be featured in Vogue Magazine (yes, you read that right — *as in THE Vogue*) and in this episode you get an exclusive behind the scenes pass on how that magic happened. But we also talk about topics that only affect the drag king community but ALL of us as

drag artists as well: stage presence, being valued, and inspiration.

There’s some epic shit in this 50min covo. Get ready to get down with all things kingly.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

- Who Ivory and how did he get started in drag 3:40
- DISCLAIMER: TDSP DOES NOT CONDONE THIS KIND OF BEHAVIOR 5:30
- How Ivory got into the pageant scene after feeling bored with his drag 8:30
- First experience in pageants 10:02
- How pageants influence his real-life drag and how he uses them as an artistic tool 12:00
- Has becoming a national title holder changed the way he does drag? 14:25
- Drag kings and their lack of representation (THIS IS GOLD!) 16:00
- Responsibilities of being the ‘first’ of your drag subculture to perform in your local scene 19:30
- The behind-the-scenes of experience of *Vogue* 20:17
- On the pressure (or not) of being a role model 29:00

- Stage presence: Getting the audience to pay attention to your performance 32:10
- Definitions of drag 34:40
- Bridging the divide in drag (THIS IS SERIOUSLY THE SHIT) 38:00
- Race and drag 39:57
- What the world needs to know about drag kings 42:45
- The drag kings HE looks up to 46:42

Who is Ivory and how he started drag and in drag pageants:

"I have been performing a few months shy of 20 years."

"I started out in Massachusetts, at this little bar ... I altered my drivers permit and got in when I was 17. There was one Drag King there before me, and I saw him perform ... I didn't know it (Drag Kings) existed and I was like Oh my God, that's what I want to do."

"Being so young, before Google and Youtube ... The only inspiration I could get was from people around me and there was two of us."

"That experience was everything ... came in dead last."

"Which goes to show ... everybody starts somewhere" - Brandi Amara Skyy

Ivory as a 2x National title holder:

"Every show that I do, needs to be the best show that I've done."

"Having a platform such as Nationals, gave me a platform that I could just try the biggest things and my wildest dreams."

"Once you become a National title holder, even when your reign is over, you have to be aware that there's people that are always going to look at you ... and people that are always watching."

Ivory on drag artist responsibility, stage presence, and representation:

"Stage presence has a lot do with commanding the stage ... commanding the stage comes from confidence in yourself. it comes from confidence in what you're putting out."

“There are a lot of people (show directors, etc), who really need to get out of their own way and diversify what they are putting on stage. And diversify what they are giving their patrons, as far as entertainment.”

“On the other side, I find that some people aren’t willing to put in the work.”

“There’s other sides than [just] being entertaining on the stage. There’s political, the networking, the community, there’s other things that play a huge part in promoting yourself and promoting your craft ... and that’s a lot of work.”

“You can’t expect people to love you; you earn that respect and love. Work so hard that people WANT to support you.”

“If you are the first person that this bar owner has seen ... a drag king, diva, non-traditional drag artist, bearded queen, WHATEVER and you are the first person to break out on that stage, you are, whether you want to or not representing your entire community.” - Brandi Amara Skyy

Ivory, as a role model and who inspires him:

“Most people that are role models don’t know they are a role model. Most people you touch you won’t meet. And even if you do meet, most of them won’t tell you they look up to you.”

“You always have to be aware that someone is looking up to you.”

“If you’re feeling that pressure, then you probably not doing some right.”

Ivory on drag and bridging the gap:

“Drag is full expression. It doesn’t matter what gender you start off with and what gender you are presenting.”

“Call all your previous judges and ask them what they thought of your performance.” David Bridgeman via Ivory Onyx

“You have to know who you are as an entertainer and that’s what you have to go with.”

“Drag Kings are valid. It is a valid art form.”

“Drag is a movement and we have to move together.”

"A movement is a battle and we are all in battle together."



Ivory & Vogue:

"There's nothing better than word of mouth ... and people remember how you make them feel."

"How I got that opportunity was that I made a connection ... and you make connections and you network, and you make people feel like you would want to feel ... But with a genuine heart"

OUTRO

That wraps up my interview with THE amazing Ivory Onyx! It was such a refreshing conversation!

Now! Make sure to tune in next Wednesday for the next episode of The Drag Show Podcast!

And if you love our show, consider tipping your MC, sound editors, and creators via our Patreon. You can be a part of the show and support our movement, #WEAREDRAG for just a \$1 a month.

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That's our show for today beautiful dragsters! Thank you to my guest Ivory Onyx for sitting through all my questions and being incredible!

And of course thank you to YOU!

For listening. For sharing your art. For doing drag your way. Or for loving it for the diverse spectrum it is. Don't forget to subscribe to our show via iTunes and while you're at drop me a like and or a review or two.

Whatever it is you do, keep doing you. Remember your otherness is your power. And go forth and be the slay you wish to see . . . flawlessly. Drag on, bitches!

THINGS MENTIONED

[The Drag Show Podcast Patreon](#)

[FB for Brandi Amara Skyy](#)

[Cher Musico Photography](#)

[Oliver Clothesoff](#)

[Katelyn Thorpe - Ivory's wife](#)

[Mr. New York USofA 2010](#)

[Ivory In His 1st Evening Wear](#)

[2013 USofA Mi](#)

[2017 USofA Classic](#)

[Vogue Magazine](#)

[David Bridgeman](#)

[Miss USofA Diva 2014 Emeritus](#)

[The Making of the Drag King Documentary](#)

[Havock von Doom - Ivory's Drag King](#)

[Hamburger Mary's Drag King Show](#)

[Nikki Kidd](#)

[Jordan Allen](#)

[Gage Gatlyn](#)

[Andro Gin](#)

[Landon Cider](#)

[Spikey Van Dykey](#)

[Gunner Gatlyn](#)

[Drag University - THE online school of drag](#)

[#wearedrag YouTube channel](#)

Devin Dame & Gage Gatlyn - [Gatlyn Dame Group](#)

Thank you Dana!!!!