



Pre-Interview Questions

Ideally you will be interviewing someone you already have an established relationship with. If not, though, be sure to get some concrete background information here about where they are from, where they live now, and how they prefer to be referred to for the recording: i.e. Legal name or stage name, and preferred pronouns

1. Where were you born?
2. What is your age?
3. How long have you been active in the drag scene?
4. Who introduced you to the scene?
5. Are you a performer / dresser / club owner/manager / talent manager / hair & makeup artist?
6. In what cities / states have you been active in the drag scene?
7. Is there anything specific you'd like to make sure we talk about?
8. Is there anything specific you'd like to NOT talk about?

Interview Questions

Use the contextual information you received during the pre-interview conversation to guide what questions you ask. The following are meant to help you in creating questions tailored to your interview subject. Don't feel limited to these questions. If your subject brings up something you'd like to ask a follow up question about, do that!

1. Tell me a bit about your childhood growing up in X and what your circle of care was like.
2. Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community?
3. What was your experience like growing up queer? [if applicable]
4. What is your earliest memory of drag?
5. How did you discover the drag scene in X, and how did you get involved?
6. Tell me a bit about your drag persona, how did you go about forming her characteristics and how does she relate to your personal experiences?
7. How does drag help you express your identity?
8. Who all has influenced your sense of style?
9. Do you have a drag mom / grandma? Can you tell me a bit about them?
10. What venues have you performed at? Any favorite memories to share of those experiences?
11. Have you participated in Miss Gay Arkansas (or other drag pageants) in any capacity?
12. What prominent figures in drag have influenced you, and why?

13. How are your personas in and out of drag related and how do they affect one another?
[If the interviewee is comfortable discussing both their legal name and stage name]
14. Is there anyone no longer with us from the drag scene that you'd like to share a memory about?
15. What do you wish people understood about drag?
16. Are you happy with media depictions of drag culture? What would you change about them if you could?
17. What changes have you seen related to the scene in Arkansas over the time you've been active in the community?
18. In a place like Arkansas, what keeps you hopeful for the future of drag and the queer community?
19. In what spaces outside of performing do you feel comfortable embracing your drag persona?
20. Is there anything you'd like to tell your younger self?

Events to consider addressing in your questions

1. Stonewall and the resulting LGBTQIA+ rights movement (1969- present)
2. Miss Gay Arkansas est. to the present (1972- present)
3. Effects of HIV/AIDS on the community (1980s – present)
4. Legislation affecting transgendered folk: bathroom bills, healthcare legislation (2010s – present)
5. Battle for legalization of gay marriage (1970s – present)
6. Drag outside of the club – Drag story hours, etc.
7. Effects of pop culture attention to drag – Ru Paul; Paris is Burning, Pose, Rocky Horror, HBO's We are Here, etc.

Getting permission

1. Never request a subject sign a consent form before you interview them but be sure not to forget to grab that signature while you still have them in the room after the interview.
2. Make sure that they understand what the agreement says before they sign
3. They have the right to donate the recording but not permit access, or to permit access on a case-by-case basis. That can all be recorded in the 'Restrictions' field of the form
4. They may only provide their stage name in the interview if they'd like, but we would prefer their legal name on the form. These forms are part of our internal records and are not accessible to the public.
5. I would recommend printing two forms and signing both so that each of you has a copy of the form to keep.
6. The form and file can be emailed to dtafsordeh@cals.org for submission.

Resources discussed can be accessed here: <https://robertslibrary.org/dragoralhistory/>

Questions? Reach Out! – Danielle Afsordeh (she/her)

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