

## FIRST OF THEIR NAME, SLAYER OF NIGHTMARES AND DREAMS.

## BIMINI INVITES US INTO THEIR SURREAL FANTASY DREAMED UP OF GENDER-BENDING DRAG AND CIS-TEM CRUSHING MUSIC.

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Oppressors of the realms, beware. From the Seas of Slay dressed in white foam, devil-blessed by the original rebels, comes a sassy saviour, Bimini. Conjured by the cries of the queers and a desperate call for an idol to adore beyond the rubbish of boundaries of the common, they're a new kind of artist. A beacon of hope championing the unifying power of pure creation.

"There's no time limit. We're all on this planet. We're all doing this thing ourselves. With what I'm doing, people are like 'where'd you want to get to'? And I'm like, 'I just want to keep going'. There's no end goal. I just want to be doing what I do and love what I do all my life," Bimini chats to us straight after they arrived home from a two-week tour. Ever since showing off their outrageous outfits in small-minded Norfolk ("I was wearing fake fur coats and smoking cigarettes, drinking diet coke, and being obsessed with Kate Moss"), working London's venues, then stealing hearts worldwide on RuPaul's Drag Race UK, to smashing the mainstream with music wearing Union Jack, they've been on the grind. "It's something my mom instilled in me. I think it's a working-class thing of where I am and what I'm doing. I never want to get off the horse. I never want to stop". Welcome to Bimini's fantasy where surreal dreams become a reality and the nightmares feel comforting.

When in 2021, Bimini stormed into Ru Paul's Werkroom, we felt the force behind the greatest past and present fashion visionaries like Alexander McQueen and Vivienne Westwood choosing a successor. A vegan working-(cl)ass queen embodying Pamela Anderson and couture, crashing cis-tems with a smile. Bimini has risen to the ranks of cultural icon, while behind the scenes they stayed Tommy Hibbits. "Bimini is the stage name of Tommy but they're not that different," the artist shares. Becoming Bimini is like putting a cloak of confidence on, an armour on someone who's already a whole person. If that means it's drag, so be it.

"To me, it's just an extension of who I am. Where does the line start and where does it ends with what drag is? Because then it's every day. Are we all doing drag? When we put on our outfits and our makeup and do our hair, you're creating an image of how you want to be viewed. Drag is a performance and it's an incredible art form," Bimini praises. Their art is for everyone, open to all genders, sexualities, identities, and self-aware of the stereotypes drag can reinforce. "When you start to realize you can deconstruct those ideologies of what was there and what it is to be a drag artist and not have to reinforce these negative, maybe sometimes misogynistic viewpoints of what a woman is," Bimini notices.

To rewrite definitions is the ambition of every new generation. "What I've learned about the world is we like labels. It allows people, and not always necessarily in a negative or bad way, to define others," they say. Bimini adopted non-binary and has been bringing awareness to the gender that existed long before it was named. "Non-binary for me and my identity, it's a rejection. That's what I believe it to be. A rejection of those notions and labels that the patriarchy, that society, that the world, has created to have these boxes and policing of what a male can do, what a female can do, how a woman should act, how a man should be," they explain. "The binary exists, and we know it exists. To a lot of people, it's so important. I would never undermine that or never say that but to me, it held me back. I don't want to be kind of defined by any of that. But for someone who is trans, it's so important for them to feel how they feel on the inside". In simple words Bimini makes the complexity of gender discourse accessible, it all comes down to humanity and a tad of empathy: "People are judging trans people, and never met a person that is trans. You can't judge someone that you've never met".

Bimini knows how it feels to be marginalised for who you are and what you want to become. "When I was growing up, I wasn't necessarily told I was creative. I actually felt like I wasn't," they revisit the days of endangering small city folks' peace of mind with fake fur extravaganza, dancing and acting for the gods. Though convinced they weren't creative enough, they circled around the ideas of academia and got a journalism degree before getting into drag in their 20s. "Art and creativity are everywhere. It's beautiful. I wish I'd got into it sooner but I'm here now. I want everyone to do it, whether you're shit at certain things, or you've never done it before. Just throw yourself in and have fun. No one's perfect, but you never know what you're going to find you're capable of". Preach.

Bimini always put words into action. Motivated by the massive success of their Drag Race pop group challenge and killer verse in 'UK Hun?', they rocket-launched a music career, debuting with 'God Save This Queen' to just finishing a tour supporting MUNA. "I feel a massive sense of accomplishment from it and achievement. It feels like the dreams that I've always wanted are within reach," Bimini smiles. It's not a rebranding but an expansion. From aesthetics to attitude their drag and songs have a lot in common. "I like to have a point of view and something to say. I like to be funny and have silly lyrics sometimes as well, but everyone has been through something where there's heartbreak," Bimini says on their, secret reveal, a new single coming out next year called 'When The Party Ends': a bop with gorgeous piano and an infectious beat.

Bimini strikes more of a serious note in 'Tommy's Dream': "It doesn't matter how you identify or where you come from, we all want to belong, but then we also want to have a reason to express who we are because we are all different", they say, "I feel like when I first performed at The Roundhouse supporting Muna, I stopped myself crying during 'Tommy's Dream' because I really get into it. I really feel it. It's part of me". Bimini's brand is vulnerability translated into hard-hitting bangers. Dream collaborators? Kim Petras and Madonna. That's one Unholy Trinity we'd bend a knee for. Until then, we pray for Bimini's new EP - think Mike Skinner, Robyn and Lily Allen's lovechild - to come out asap. And it's perfect for the gloomy season: "Sad bangers, I'd say. Depression with a beat," they reveal.

Deeper into the subliminal, we venture out of paradise into the unknown. Mirages blend with the matter. Even saviours can lose their minds surrounded by manipulative mass. "I was becoming a bit of a puppet or product for other people's image. Whereas I have my own ideas. I've really been able to get to that space where I feel confident and believe that I have those ideas," Bimini shares on gaining confidence after Drag Race. Having battled the imposter syndrome and superficiality of the fashion world, Bimini's eyes sparkle when they're talking about their passion for concepts. "There's always a story. It's never just, 'oh, let's put in a pretty outfit'. There's a reason for it'. [...] For me, it's an art form. It's an extension of being able to portray myself. I love always changing," Bimini dreams.

Before dawn came, Bimini learnt how to bask in the glimmering night sky. "Tapping into that darker side and acknowledging that it exists is important because it's about knowing you don't want to go to that place, but that place exists within all of us. Life is full of highs and lows. We go through the motions so many times," they say. "I've gone through things that I never expected to go through. I've come out of that. I've been able to deal with it. I have found strength in myself. There's that darker side of everything". Whether you call it a shadow or a saboteur, this kind of void lives in everything human, in every one of us. Sometimes it even dares to visit our self-made Gardens of Eden, so we need to know how to take care of it. "When something negative happens, or I've lost someone that I thought I wasn't gonna lose, or I feel like I've been betrayed or backstabbed by close friends, or relationships, trying to find continue to find the goodness in people is something that I always want to have," Bimini manifests. You're meant to pour affection into the abyss.

"I'm in a space now where I'm probably the happiest I've been since the show," Bimini shares. There's a sense of sincerity and a strive for authenticity that makes us believe it and root for them no matter what fancy they'll pursue next. It'll be epic. "Fantasy is everywhere for everyone. We all have dreams. We all have fantasies of what we want and what we expect. It's also with the idea of those dreams come we do have the nightmare side as well. It's bridging that between both of them," they affirm. In the name of Heaven and Hell, subconscious and conscious, we summon Bimini, The First of Their Name, Slayer of Nightmares and Dreams to sing us sweet songs of liberation. Revolution is here, babes.