

'TINA' FROM PAGE 12

what it would be like to have this many hit records and be this successful. In America there are a lot of stars, and I say they're dimly lit stars, who are popular for just doing covers and a few originals. I know that well because that's basically how I started in St Louis.

"I used to wonder how you could pack a football stadium and Roger said to me 'you've got to get a sleeve of hit records,' it's not done just by one record or performance. That's when I realised what success in the business meant."

The title track to *Private Dancer* was written by Dire Straits' Mark Knopfler, a song that perfectly suited the Tina Turner persona:

"Mark wrote it for himself and it had been on the shelf for a while as he thought it would be a good song for a girl. When I heard the song I was really taken by it because one of my little dilemmas is that people never put a label on me as a singer, it's always been 'yknow, the dancer, Tina Turner.' That song really showed my ability to sing, my vocal talents of range, depth and mood."

Why do 'Help'?

"I've never heard it done before except by the Beatles and the version I got was from Australia's Little River Band, I think. This was two years before I recorded it and I did it live on stage and the response was just incredible. So I just wanted to record my own version of it. In fact we failed



to capture my delivery of it on *Private Dancer*, to do that we would have to record it live.

"I think a lot of people can relate to a song the way I sing it. The Beatles sang it sort of happy-go-lucky whereas I do it as a plea. Some journalists don't like it, they find it too contrived, but I get a standing ovation from the crowd, so ..."

#### Private Person

"A Canadian journalist said to me that it's strange coming up with a song like 'We Don't Need Another Hero' after something like 'What's Love Got To Do With It?'. Actually, if you look at it you can relate it to my past life, like coming out of one life into another where you don't need someone to guide you."

Tina's stormy relationship with Ike ended 10 years ago when she left him, with 36 cents in her handbag. Since then she has been into Buddhism and chanting. A reaction to the tough years with Ike?

"I started chanting the last two years with Ike. I was just getting into learning the practice and studying and getting to accept it. I was a Baptist before. It didn't take long for me to change my mind as most of our religions or philosophies were passed down from my parents and after we're old enough we can make a decision as to what we want and that's what happened to me when I was 35 years old."

In a recent interview Ike has claimed the credit

for the sex angle of the Ike and Tina Turner Revue (the Ikettes in mini skirts and suggestive routines and Tina's famous phallic microphone stint):

"The idea came from some of the songs that were chosen and I act out my songs as I'm singing them as I have my idea of what I get from a song. For instance, I always thought Foreigner's 'I Wanna Know What Love Is' to be very sexual and some people see it as very spiritual. So I think some of the songs I performed in the earlier days came off sexual because that's the message I saw in them."

To what extent is your highly publicised sex image a natural part of your personality?

"I don't know. It's like asking you what makes you the way you are when you get a bit tipsy. That inner side of you that you don't necessarily know on a day-to-day basis just comes out in a performance. It's the same with an actor. I call it naughtiness, I don't call it sexiness as my idea of that is women like Marilyn Monroe and a lot of other sexy over-the-top women. I think most women are sexy anyway and if you put one on a stage in a short dress then there's bound to be sex appeal there. But that's not a priority in my work. It's part of my performance and my idea of that covers sadness, joy, a bit of naughtiness, sex and a bit of life."

Tina's life with Ike could launch a thousand Hollywood TV movies:

"It's been 10 years since I left Ike and to tell you the truth I don't think that much about it. I finished part of my life there. I gave all of my time and I gave everything and I left everything."

"I've experienced a kind of freedom that most people wouldn't realise as you would have to have lived that life with Ike. Also I've found myself, my

**"With my work I don't have the time to go out and search for a particular type of colour or friend."**

limitations, the areas where I need help, and my own strengths."

Ike has said recently that you never wanted to be black:

"No, I've never said that. I've always felt there are other races to choose from other than just the white race whom a lot of our people pattern themselves on."

"My taste in friends has been a mixture since Ike as I haven't been around a lot of black people. So a lot of black people could think that I never wanted to be black but that's not true. With my work I don't have the time to go out and search for a particular type of colour or friend."

Yet unlike most other black performers you've opted for rock 'n' roll over R&B:

"For me that was natural. I'm physical, I'm a dancer. Black music sorta grooves and I've always liked energy, tempo and the rock feeling. In the early days most of the songs that Ike produced were R&B songs but I always covered that extra physical side that I needed with songs by the Stones or Rod Stewart or whatever. Even now I have to do covers to fill my needs as a performer."

The first half of my show is a straight performance delivery. Then I make a costume change and then I go into covering as those are the songs I need for my physical performance."

#### Star Survivor

Tina's TV room in her LA house is covered with platinum records: "There's no place to hang them anymore, they're filling up the room. In fact I've taken a few to my mother's house, which is only 15 minutes away. I thought I'd fill the wall during the remainder of my musical life but I didn't expect to fill it in one year."

You live in Beverly Hills?

"No, I live in the Valley side, under Beverly Hills. I like it a lot, it's small and it's like getting away. I don't live in Beverly Hills because I'm always in the city, in the hotels. My house is out from that and it has a country feeling."

Has material success been important to you?

"I'd have to honestly say yes and no. It is important but it's not a priority because I'm not a material girl but my taste is expensive and there's a lot of things I want. Aside from that, a lot of things you earn you get an inner peace from, so I'm taking care of myself spiritually and materially as well."

*Private Dancer* begins with 'I Might Have Been Queen (Soul Survivor)'. To what extent do you see yourself as a survivor?

"When you talk about someone who survives it often means that someone has come out of a plane accident or something horrible. But when someone has strived since childhood and climbed to the top then you have to put the title of survivor on that person — me, a girl from the South, cottonfields, black, rough marriage, violence, everything taken from the beginning to the middle of life and then finally not being broken in spirit to decide at 35 that you can still have time to go and get your dreams. You'd have to put the term of survivor on me."

Even survivors call it a day, so at what age or stage does Tina Turner call it quits?

"I can't speak for the future. I read a lot of what people say they won't do at certain ages but you change. Some miraculous change may occur and I might not be in the business or I might leap one step higher. I'm not planning."

George Kay

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