



Skinhead Venus

Lady \$kollie brings an erotic jolt to the art scene, writes **Lin Sampson**

Photograph: **Ruvan Boshoff**

I AM sitting with Lady \$kollie (aka Laura Windvogel) at the Planet Bar in the Mount Nelson. \$kollie's face is as fresh as an open flower. Her shaved head is engraved with geometrical designs. She is made up of round shapes; she looks like a Hindu goddess, with curly scarlet lips.

"I try to keep my bum round by eating lots of bread and doing squats," she says.

"I am writer, an artist, a sex-show host, a social media entrepreneur, a rapper, a musician, a porn entrepreneur, a gender aficionado, a DJ. I've always wanted a rock-star life. I want to be a fine artist with the conscience of a rapper."

Her hairdo has caused an alert with hotel security. "It's so *las*," she says, "they think I am from space."

Sitting next to us is Sean Penn, running lines with some mates. We debate asking if we can snap him. "No, I couldn't — it's such a loss of power," she says. "I once saw John Cleese. I thought, 'My God, that is either a homeless man or him.' I flung my arms around him and screamed, 'I love you.' So embarrassing."

We talk about celebrity. "Sometimes I have to catch myself: why do you care so much about these people? There are whole sites on the net devoted to fictional exchanges between celebrities."

\$kollie got on the front foot with her sex zine *Kaapstad Kinsey*, which was released on Aids Day two years ago. "Most people love talking about sex. It's just a matter of coaxing it out of them. I asked people to write about their first sexual experiences. I had questions like, what's your number? That's how many people have you slept with."

The results were potent.

For example: "I was about seven and riding my horse and we had just got him a new saddle and there was way more friction down there. I remember this overwhelming good sensation." — Lily, 28.

She says the main thing she has learnt in the last year is to have your own boundaries. "I was expending too much energy and not getting anything back. It's so tiring being saucy all the time."

\$kollie is an internet whore, the go-to girl for info. She has mined its darkest secrets, stalked and spun. "You can stalk everyone and see their level of internet knowledge by the articles they share," she says.

She's reading *Foreskin's Lament* by Shalom Auslander.

In a more hands-on (if you'll pardon the expression) and less pointy-headed way, she is the Camille Paglia of the internet.

"There are a lot of women at the moment

'Most people love talking about sex. It's just a matter of coaxing it out of them'

paving the way to viewing sex in an alternative manner," she tells me.

She admires outrageous women who have succeeded against the odds. "Comedian Amy Schumer — oh my God, you have to look at her porn movie, taken from a woman's point of view. One minute your face is like in a duvet, then you have a potbelly in your chin, it's super funny. And Amber Rose, ex-girlfriend of Kanye West, she is so hot. I like her attitude; she was a stripper and has written a book *How To Be a Bad Bitch*."

Lady \$kollie belongs to the scroller generation — never without her trusty iPad.

"Everything, everything has changed. People underestimate the change. Social media rules: the world has never been smaller and representing yourself has never been cheaper. If people don't know about you, you should be asking yourself questions. Artists have to get out of their caves."

\$kollie does a lot of work around relationships, sex and porn, and is famous for

having sex parties. "I was having sex parties every three months at different places. Well, not parties where people literally have sex, but sex-themed parties sponsored by a condom company."

Lady \$kollie lives with a man with an intriguing half-Jewish, half-Xhosa name, Batandwa Alperstein, and says for the first time she is really in love. "He has been invaluable, like telling me how to strategise. The kind of things I do can seem gratuitous and cheap."

The word "gender" flickers. "I have always felt very masculine," she says. "I went to sleep one day when I was 11 and I was a boy, and I woke up and I had tits and an ass, everyone said, 'Wow, Laura's a girl!'"

"I think I am a bad bitch — but I can also bake bread and I dream of living on a farm and gathering apples in my apron."

"For me there is always that struggle: when oven mitts become boxing gloves. One moment I'm, 'Oh my God here are some cupcakes,' the next I am, 'What the f***? I have been washing these dishes for four days!'"

Her show of paintings, now on at Worldart gallery in Cape Town, is titled, *Ask For What You Want*. It reveals an inner, more vulnerable Lady \$kollie. The works are watercolours on paper: they are loose and fluid but convey a hard message.

One caption reads: "Enamoured with the fertility masks, then the fertility god tells you to go f*** yourself."

"They are mostly about having a miscarriage," she says.

"I know I am good at writing. I have my visual arts degree but I still don't know how to bring the two together."

Your mid-twenties is a confusing age, not least in these confusing times. But \$kollie is riding its hormonal edge — and wearing spurs. **LS @hellschreiber**
<http://issuu.com/laurawindvogel/docs/kk>