**Trudy Extracts Joined**

**Trudy:**  I came to London when I was seventeen initially. I came and auditioned for drama school. I’d come from a very small mill town in Lancashire, and as you can hear from my accent - completely changed from my original accent. And I think that I, like many other young people came to London from small places, gay people, and had the chance to live the kind of lives and become the kind of people we wanted to become. So I sort of re-invented myself really when I came to London. And I went to drama school and started, I had a boyfriend at the time who was Burmese and I thought he was the most beautiful boy I’d ever seen, and it quickly became apparent that his friends, who he’d lived with, were his lovers.

**Paul:**  Ah ah ah!

**Trudy:**  And I’d had lots of sexual experiences with girls before I came to London, so I announced that I was bisexual, and then he admitted that he was bisexual. And he lived in Hampstead, so I used to stay with him every, every weekend when I wasn’t at college, and we’d dress up and we’d hit the clubs, and those boys, they were so beautiful. So glamorous. I’d never seen that kind of glamour - the hours of make-up. I used to wear Sidney’s clothes, and had tiaras and feathers. We’d go down, we’d go to places like The Sombrero Chub, which was terrific fun, and that’s where I started meeting women too. But of course, some of the, what I thought were women, were in fact boys!

**Paul:**  Yeah.

**Trudy:**  But it was all very jokey, and lots of drugs, and so it was sort of buffeted along with lots of sorts of drugs. I mean, I didn’t drink at all then. But yes, I suppose drugs and alcohol the whole scene was fuelled by, and then recovering during the week and hitting it again at the weekend. And during this period -I am 62 now - so this was when I was sort of 18,19, 20. I did go down The Gateways and I was just horrified! Because I was very femme, I had waist length blond hair and very feminine, but actually I quite fancied very femmy girls. And down The Gates it was so stereotype, and when I’d even try to approach those very femme and older women, they just flicked me off, and said ‘Go away! Go, get away!’

**Paul:**  You were too feminine for them?

**Trudy:**  Because they were looking for someone who was more masculine, their counter- part was butch or femme, so I didn’t really fit in with that regimented scene, and of course being arty, the art world, anything went really, so I sort of moved into the art world, and you know, started doing collaborations with various artists and doing shows, school tours and bits and pieces of bits of film and television, not very small, and then what happened, was, I got involved with the women’s liberation movement.

**Paul:**  Wonderful …

**Trudy:**  I went over to New York when I was eighteen and met some of the women over there by chance, and came back with a suitcase full of plastic speculums, mad keen to sort of have consciousness raising groups and so I got very involved with the women’s movement and campaigned for things like Reclaims the Night, A Women’s Right to Choose, but more specifically on the art scene. I mean I’ve always been political, you know, I was a member of CND, and CHE, and also Rock against Racism, lots of various, where I tended to perform really in singing, or singing and dancing or, you know, fundraising, but always on the entertaining side. I’ve never done any other job in my whole life apart from working in entertainment… industry

**Paul:** I think the challenges of growing older and still being feeling alive and not being straight jacketed into agist stereotypes is even more important.

**Trudy:**  at 62, as someone who is very active sexually I would at 17 never thought that someone would be sexually active, single and going out and really looking for it, being lively so you know when you are getting older when looking back at it now and also within the range of female sexuality, unlike the whole male structure, older women are really, being prized within our community.

**Paul:**  yes,when I came to London, I wanted to have sex with older women, I wanted it because I felt they had more sophisticated , more money, more experiences, more life experiences and I wanted access, and now here I am, I am an older women, getting a ot of attention, from younger women and inn some cases because when I was younger I thought if I just hurled myself at them, if I kept on trying I would wear them down they would say yes but no, no, never works.

 so what does work now?

**Trudy:**  anything can work if you are in the right frame of mind, I think its about how you are feeling within yourself … you can go out, I can be in a situation and be approached and a number of times I think , no, no, no, but at other times I can think no, no, ooh yes .

 laugh …

Would you like to hear some poetry?

**Paul:**  yes …please do, that would fit beautifully in this.

**Trudy:**  well this is a poem I read, for the special mic session and its about what I feel about poetry.

**Paul:**  that’s wonderful, thank you, Trudy.

**Trudy:**  I just need to get my glasses …it’s called “Heart felt”.

My name is Trudy and I am a poem.

I am the whisper in your ear,

The tap, tap, tap on the window

The unexpected letter

I am your secret hope,

The best you wish for,

Laughter in your house.

I am the voice of love

Poetry expands our senses,

Brings out the best and worst

Transforms pain into grace,

makes us bigger people.

Hear the poem in your heart,

Let it come out

It belongs to you, entirely,

It is your gift to yourself