



Miss Suzette Veneti's advice on starting out: "Just figure it out and do it."

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUZETTE VENETI

Pushing boundaries

Local drag performer **Miss Suzette Veneti** didn't wait for a stage to come to her. Instead, she decided to create one herself. A performer of three years, Veneti produces drag shows all around Sacramento, including "Queens and Comedy" and "Fierce Fresh and Fabulous," a drag show that highlights performers under 21, held at **STAB! Comedy Theater**. Veneti says she identifies with being a "comedy queen," but she also wants to be seen as a well-rounded performer. She can regularly be seen pushing boundaries with her jokes, dancing in heels, lip-syncing and sipping a cosmo. On **Feb. 16**, you can catch her at **Punch Line Sacramento's** all-ages drag brunch, "Makeup & Mimosas." SN&R chatted with Veneti to learn more about how to get into drag, what it takes to produce a drag show and more.

Why did you choose to produce a show that included younger queens?

I knew there was an under 21 scene, and like, where do you perform if you're under 21, like how do you perform? There was a show called "Drag Star" that was for under 21 performers, but it's very important to state that we didn't start our show because those other ones existed to compete, but more to just add. Why not have more shows where under 21 people can perform?

Do you have any advice for people who want to try drag?

Just do it. I mean if you're interested in it, just try it. I think that's something that I can speak on about Suzette. You don't have to be a certain type of person to do drag. You can be a woman and you can be a drag king. You can be a man or a woman and you can be a drag queen. You

can be a man and be straight or gay. You can be under 18. You can be over 21. Just figure it out and do it. Some people just do it on Instagram. People get on [RuPaul's] *Drag Race* just from being on Instagram. A lot of the queens at "Fierce Fresh and Fabulous" have only done drag in their bedroom before, but they've done it. They'll walk the dog in drag and it's like, if you don't like it you can stop, it's not going to brand you for life if you just try it.

What does it take to produce a drag show?

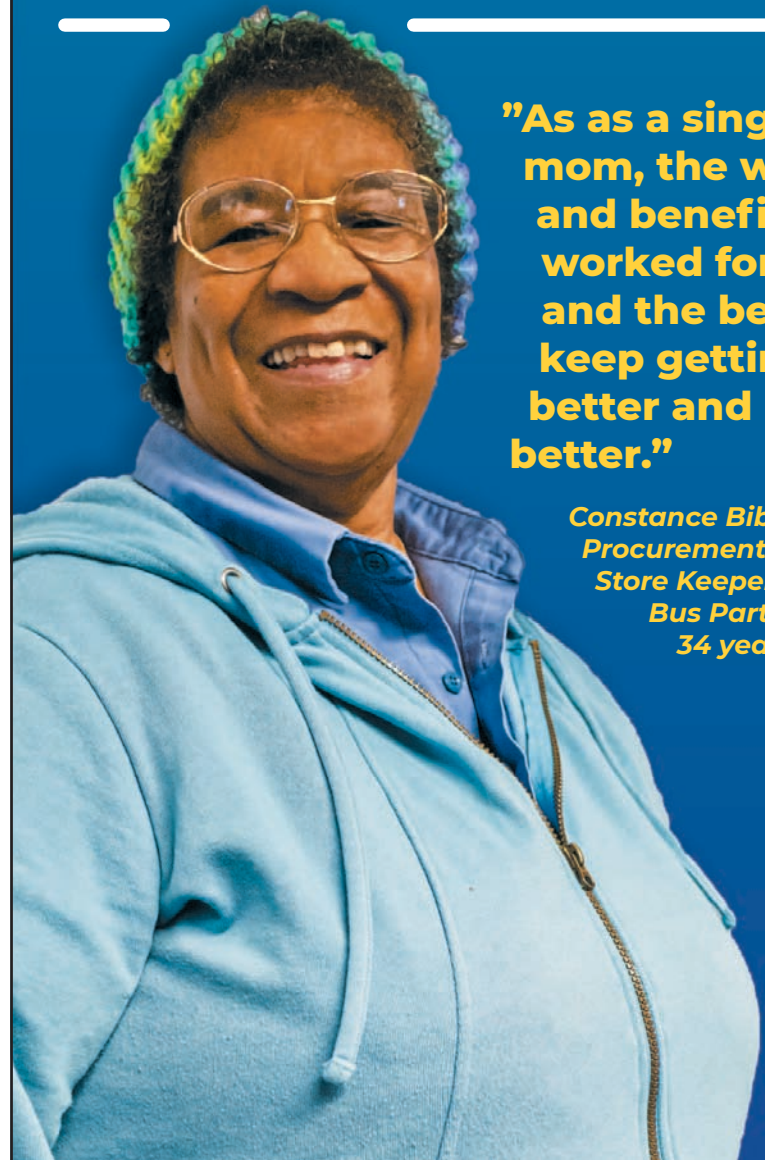
I have a friend who's just a producer and we laugh because people think we make thousands every show. It's like, no, especially if you're paying people. If your payroll is \$800, you have to make \$900 just to get \$100. I think producing is the best way to make sure you can perform. If you produce, you can book yourself, but that also comes with the downside of the dangers of producing a failure. I've had shows get canceled and I've had shows that don't exist anymore. I used to have a show at Capitol Garage and [now] I don't have it. I used to do shows at Luna's and now I don't, and those failures hurt but they're good. It's good to fail because then you're scared.

What's next for Suzette?

I am finally starting to take "Queens and Comedy" outside of Sacramento, but I will never stop doing it in Sacramento because I love both the local drag community and the local comedy community. I love bringing in these comics that people might not get to see otherwise. I'm still looking for space and time to do my other shows that are even weirder ideas, and show how good drag and comedy are, and how hard it is to be good at them. I want to just keep doing stuff, and I want to keep pushing the boundaries and the norm. □

Sip some mimosas with Suzette Veneti at Punch Line Sacramento, 2100 Arden Way, Feb. 16, 11 a.m. Tickets are \$16.

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