

KITS Radio Interview

"Alex in the Morning on Live 105" in San Francisco - Date unknown (probably 1996, as she was still performing at Bimbos)

Interview: Alex Bennett

Submitted to the Shrine by Hagenpaws

(Nina walks into the studio and whispers something into Alex's ear, then starts making squeaking, popping and tongue-clicking noises)

Alex Bennett: Oh gee...I'm getting a woody! Wow, that's almost a Betty Page number - in bondage!

Nina Hagen: That's my, um, my Mrs. Romanesque outfit. That one there.

AB: Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome Nina Hagen.

(applause)

NH: Howdy. (Nina starts making dog noises) Woof!

AB: You know, the way I really got to know your music is two friends of mine - they play your music before every show that they do.

NH: They do they do they do? You mean I'm a legend...a legend...a legend?

AB: Penn and Teller play your music to the audience before the show starts

NH: Dufte! Goodness gracious I feel like Mozart now!

AB: Do you know who Penn and Teller are?

NH: No - not yet.

(laughter from Alex and the studio audience)

AB: They love your music! Penn and Teller...the magicians... tall one the short one that doesn't talk

NH: Are they from town here? From San Francisco?

AB: No, they are from New York. They are big. National. They are taking London by storm now.

NH: Ahh haa.

AB: They haven't made it to Germany yet...

NH: (deep voice - in a 'well, then who cares' kind of tone..) Ahhhh haaaaa.

(This cracks everyone up)

AB: You know, I asked this of Brad, but, where did you get such a deep voice?

NH: (In a very high, squeaky voice) Weeeelllll, I don't know. I rrrrrreally don't. It beats me, but I have like 99 different possibilities. Umm, I had them before I saw my first space ship - these different voices, so it's not an implant or something like that.

AB: You saw a space ship?

NH: Definitely did...and I gave birth to two children too. and I (inaudible) of two, two, two.

AB: Now, wait a minute. The space ships didn't have anything to do with the kids, did they?

NH: Well, the one...the first big experience with the first one on Malibu beach in Nineteen Hundred Eighty I was pregnant with my first child and she is a very smart child and she's 13 now and, ah, when she, you know, this experience was very nice. Nothing horrible or nothing like that. Good light...

AB: And the horns were coming in nice too. .

NH: Good, strong colors. Good energy and happiness

AB: Yeah, and...

NH: Well, and then Cosma was born and I called her Cos. .

AB: (keeps trying to interrupt Nina who refuses to be interrupted) Did you think that was because of the flying sau...

NH: Because of Cosmos...cosmic...what was happening in the cosmic . .

AB: So you named your son Cosma?

NH: That's the daughter, Cosma. And my son is called Otis - like Otis Redding and the elevators.

(lots of laughter)

AB: That sounds like the name of a group - 'Otis and the Elevators'.

NH: (whispers) Yeah. (sounds like everyone in the studio starts whispering, "yeah" too)

AB: Penn and Teller love her music. They play her music before every show they did on Broadway and she doesn't know who they are.

NH: (squeaky voice) Oh boy! At least I know who the Ramones are!

(laughter)

AB: For years Joey didn't though. Ahhh...

NH: Dee Dee does!

AB: Well, Dee Dee is not with them anymore

NH: Yeah, Dee Dee is with me now.

AB: Is he with you now?

NH: Yeah. Definitely! Ah, he's just doing his solo album in Holland. They're mixing now and he did an duet with me and we're going to join...ahh venture. 'Joint' venture pretty soon. He's going on his tour. I go on my tour, but at one point we're going to join bands. We are already writing songs together. It's great!

AB: He is a very, funny person.

NH: Definitely is, and one of the, ah, seldom to be seen around people who ah, kicked a life-long habit of drug misuse. So, glory and hail to Dee Dee!

AB: Yeah, that's right! I was talking to Joey about him a couple of weeks ago, and he says he is doing great! He said he's cleaned up and he's making this album and Joey is, I think helping out on it a little bit. Seems everybody is kind of adding into it. He did want to - for a while - I guess while he was still stoned - want to be a rap singer.

NH: Yeah - me too! Me too!!

AB: You want to be a rap singer?

NH: Well, I did. In 83 the Red Hot Chili Peppers wrote me my first rap and I translated it into german and I was the first german rapper, now thank god, we have a big rap scene in germany now

AB: Could you just recite some of it for us - in german?

NH: In german? Yeah. . (Nina starts singing, "Was Es Ist" acapella in her 'exorcist' voice. Afterwards the audience breaks into applause and there are shouts of "Yeah!" and "Nina's in the house!")

AB: You give me the willies!

NH: Yeah, and so talking about Dee Dee, and Dee Dee again, Dee Dee Ramone wrote three songs with me for this musical we are doing here with ahh, Peter Stack...

AB: Now, explain this. This is about Anita Berber, huh? Who I'm not familiar...The Seven Addictions and Five Professions of Anita Berber - the International Celebration of Legendary 20's Naked Dancer. Does that mean you're naked on stage?

NH: No, not me, cause I'm a Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist Woman and I don't go naked on stage

Peter Stack: (Shows emcee and SF personality) But the naked dancer will be

NH: Yeah, she will. Definitely and um...

PS: It's a celebration of addictions...

NH: It's a lady from the 20's. She was born and grew up and died in Berlin when she was 29 and her name was Anita not Evita

AB: The other voice you are hearing is not one of Nina's' voices, it's the voice of Peter Stack

NH: Yeah, that's Peter Stack

(applause)

AB: Well, what is this exactly. I mean, explain it.

PS: It's a celebration of addictions, and we have taken to the stage the story of a woman's life, Anita Berber, who was a naked dancer; an expressionist poet; a fashion model; a film actress. She was an artist whose life style she lived to dance and perform it, so she was totally an artist. She would inject herself with drugs and then dance to morphine for a crowd.

NH: And she was addicted also to cognac and she wanted to become world famous, but there was no MTV at that time - it was in the 20's

PS: and so she, um, put her addictions, her fixations and her obsessions on the stage.

AB: Which, if she did it today she would be on the cover of People Magazine

NH: Oh yeah!

AB: Or on the Geraldo Rivera show

PS: With Latoya!

NH: She wrote beautiful poetry, and we were putting it to music and it's like a musical - kind of

AB: So now, your participation in the show is what?

NH: Well, we have, um, many Anita Berber's who are presenting her different personalities, like the one when she is a poet, and the one who dances, and um...

PS: And the one who sings some of her poetry which is Nina Hagen

NH: Yeah!

PS: And we have our dancer, Jennifer Perrin; and our poetess Sheila Gordon and so, ahh, I play the emcee of the show, and I basically walk you through this woman's addictions. We listen to her poetry which has been translated by our Producer, and ahh,...

AB: Sounds fascinating

PS: It's amazing and San Francisco hasn't seen anything like this in a long time.

NH: Good music coming at you!

AB: So, Nina came in for this little show of yours

NH: Oh definitely!

PS: Well, we found her and told her about it and she said, "So be it. Make it happen" and so we're here - doing it.

AB: Yeah.

NH: Yeah.

PS: Yeah. It's really fun. It's quite a thing. We've all known each other. We've crossed each others paths for years and now it's like a full circle going on with the production. It's like old friends meeting. It's a spiritual, circle, event. Kind of like Anitas life.

NH: Flava Va Khee - chay! (sp?)

AB: Please don't think of this as a rude question...

NH: Not at all.

AB: ...but, how many of those wigs do you have?

(Peter gasps loudly)

NH: Well, we have one here and one under, and...

AB: Is the one under in case the first one falls off?

NH: I just shaved all my hair off in India. I'm a positive skinhead now!

PS: And there is two in case I can't get in someplace 'cause I have no hair I just put one of hers on

AB: Because that is such a great...

Guest: You mean you can't get in somewhere because you have no hair?

PS: Well, you know some places won't let me in cause I have no hair, so she just brings extra and ...

AB: What is it, like, screwed in or something?

NH: No. Into the 2nd wig.

AB: Into the second wig, and ah, why is that, so that the 2nd will hold the first one...

NH: Well, you know to make it, ah, a little higher elevation here...

PS: Without teasing it you know.

NH: Like the Himalayan experience you know...as high as you can get!

AB: Underneath all that you wear your hair real short?

NH: Yep, but you will see, when I am on stage I have my real hair and everything, and. .

AB: So basically, you could walk down the street and nobody would recognize you?

PS: Oh yes they would!!

NH: I think people recognize me from my, um, extreme love vibration which is coming out because I'm a big mother. I mean I'm a huge Mother

(laughter)

NH: I feel, also, my love...I'm happy about it - that I have it and I'm grateful to God that he gave me such a thing called love which I can give away which is what love is all about!

PS: And then the replenishing part comes after. We are giving awards away for the most deprived - the most depraved couples there. We are giving some prizes away in the middle of the show and um, you have to get the prize home quick or it will die, but, um...

AB: So when is this show?

NH: (squeaks) Middle of the week.

(laughter)

PS: We play Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and possibly Saturday.

AB: At Bimbos?

PS: Yes.

NH: Im not an empty-headed bimbo!

(laughter)

AB: I wasn't saying that you were!

NH: (little girl voice) Sorry.

AB: (Imitating Nina's growl) That's okay. Ah, you are a treat Nina. You really

are.

(applause)

NH: Thank you everybody. Thank you everybody!!

AB: You know who I think somebody should do a movie about? I was a Quoit Tower this morning and there was a description on a placard about the life of Lilly Hitchcock Quoit - are you familiar with her?

PS: Oh yeah

AB: This is a woman who would dress up like a man so she could go on men's hunting trips

PS: It's a great role for Candice Bergen isn't' it?

(laughter)

AB: I mean she was like the first, 'invade the sanctity of the male dominion' type. Really an incredible woman.

PS: She probably didn't even really care - like she was just doing it, ya know? She was a free spirit. Same with Anita.

AB: I think she was the first woman to walk around San Francisco without a bra...

PS: The nerve!

AB: It wasn't like she was a wanton woman as much as she was just a free-spirit and yet, you just think of her creating this fire hose that's sticking up in the air on the top of our city. Do you know how much Quoit Tower cost? - \$125,000.

PS: I'll take it!

AB: What do yo do after this Nina? Where are you headed?

NH: Um, I go and see a couple of dates of Dee Dee Ramones' tour in Europe of course, and then I go on my own tour starting middle of May, and after one month, after the 21st of June I'm going to be in San Francisco at a big open air festival (Note: Nina never made it to this show because of problems with her passport) and then I tour the states and then around the world with my, ah, stuff.

AB: You know, when I'm in Europe I love watching german television

NH: Yeah, me too.

AB: And I love your game shows. Your family feud is wonderful

NH: But, it's all from American owners I think. I mean it's all from Merv Griffin - right?

AB: Well, Family Feud is, um, Mark Goodsen, but I love watching Family Feud in german...(in german accent - again), 'Hanzel und Gretel!'

Guest: That's all the german Alex knows.

AB - No, it's like when you watch foreign television, there is always some word you understand. Pepsi! He said, "Pepsi"

NH: Yuck!!

AB: And there are such good-looking people on german television.

NH: But on italian television also... oh boy! And spanish television - boom...chaka laka!

AB: Well, what are we all doing here?

NH: Well, we are everywhere

AB: A bunch of big, fat Americans on TV

NH: Ha ha ha. Well, I was fat twice too. Or maybe thrice!

AB: What's the most popular show in germany right now?

NH: Um, my favorite show is Frau Helen from (?) and she is the national, um, most loved and wanted and hated lesbian TV presenter and she's very funny. Ah, she's round - kind of - but she's very beautiful and sexy looking and blonde and stuff and she has a TV show on RTL2 and it's called, "When the Post Frau Rings Twice" or "Wenn Die Postfrau Zwie Macht Klingele"

AB: Now what's the 'Post Frau' - postman?

NH: Post Frau is post woman. Yeah, its very funny. She, ah, goes to her guest's house and she is looking around in your private home and finds stuff. The one's she invites to her show she is doing things behind their back.

AB: And snoops around?

NH: Yeah, and snoops around, but of course, they allow it before hand

AB: That's a great idea for a show.

NH: And then she invites your childhood friends and all of a sudden you see your childhood girlfriend who you hated to pieces and you have to make up on her show and its very funny ideas...

Guest: Is it ever dirty?

NH: Well, she is never dirty, but she is, well, ah...very flammey, hot, sizzling, but never dirty at all. I don't know what you mean, what...

Guest: Sexy.

NH: Yeah. There we go; there we go; there we go again.

AB: We are talking filthy dirty here?

NH: Yeah, but in a jokeful way of course

AB: Well, it is a pleasure having you here. If for nothing more than for the costumes

NH: Thanks. Vivian Westwood - with the baby face

AB: Huh?

NH: It's Vivian Westwood with the baby face. You mentioned my clothing? Yeah, Vivian VESTwood!

AB: Who is Vivian West...

NH: One of the worlds big designers from England. Vivian! She was already you know in the punk days...Guest: Alex only knows 'Members Only'

AB: Yeah. I don't wear dresses.

Guest: What does your shirt say Alex? Replay?

AB: That's german isn't it? Oh no, that's italian.

NH: I don't live in Germany. I was only born in Germany, but I don't live

there. I live in Spain on the beautiful island of Ibiza. I live also outside of London...

AB: Hey, Ibiza! I go to Ibiza all the time!

NH: I mean Europe is Europe, I mean Deutschland is just a little thing in there.

AB: I go to Ibiza all the time

NH: You do?

AB: I've been going there since 1975

NH: Me since 1979

AB: So I was there before you were.

NH: Yeah...

AB: but it's not like it used to be...

NH: You could be my mother

(laughter)

AB: I remember back in those days Ursula Andrews used to take her wash to the Laundromat all by herself

NH: Really?! It's a nice community there

AB: It's changed a lot

NH: Wonderful community. International. Lots of Americans and ...

AB: I liked it when there was no electricity and no telephones and ...

NH: But there still are places where there is no electricity and no telephones but my house has a telephone.

AB: So you live in Ibiza?

NH: Well, I live where I work and I work where I live, but when I have time I'm there and we write songs and we have a studio and...

AB: What part of the island?

NH: All of them, you know because my friends, they are spread all over.

AB: Oh I see. But you own a home there?

NH: I never did own anything and I don't and I refuse. I pay rent to Abbey Sincoes(?)

AB: Oh, very good. Very nice.

NH: I don't want to own. I, ah, was in the earthquake, and ah, for what, you know? You can't take it to heaven anyway

AB: To me, the best moments of my life are spent out at Vedra - out at the beach out at Caldo Art, with a nice glass of (?), soaking in the sun...

Guest: Ah yea, we can all relate to this Alex

(laughter)

PS: Everybody is starting to cry!

NH: So come to Spain this summer everybody! We make big beach parties and open air concerts in Ibiza all summer long.

AB: Well, maybe we will bump into each other sometime.

NH: Yeah! Okay everybody. Thanks very much

AB: Nina Hagen everybody. The 7 Addictions and 5 Professions of Anita Berber at Bimbos. Tickets are available at Bass and we will be right back.

(applause)