

A LOOK AT THE ONE AND ONLY RUPAUL

ICON

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“

I DISCOVERED MYSELF.

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In 2014 with *Drag Race* entering its sixth season—not to mention his countless red carpet appearances, albums, shoes, make-up and perfume line, it’s kind of hard to fathom a time when RuPaul wasn’t *RUPAUL*. What’s even harder to imagine is indthat this megastar was once in the exact same spot that all dragsters find themselves in—at the beginning of their career.

And his beginnings aren’t that far removed from some of our own. He found drag accidentally when he donned it as a gimmick for his punk rock band, made a name for himself in the local club scene, moved to New York and made lots of drag friends, and dreamt of a better world filled with glitter, glam, drag, and him. But like other soon-to-be revolutionaries, he didn’t stop at the dream. *He became it.*

When he saw a void in pop culture; he *became* the fill. When he saw that neither he nor his art was represented in mainstream media; he *became* the symbol by launching himself and his single,

“Supermodel (You Better Work),” into the world. He created his stardom in his own image, seized it, and *became* it. Instead of waiting for fame to come to him, he went to fame; instead of waiting for the market to be open and ready for the Supermodel of the World he forged ahead with his dreams; instead of caving to the world, he bent the world to him.

And boy has the bent been massive.

RuPaul is a brand, a family of drag, and a pop cultural phenomenon. And, like it or not, he is changing the landscape of drag. He’s made drag accessible to vanilla media, launched many queens into reality TV stardom, and he’s been the vehicle that propelled drag into realms no one ever thought it would go—specifically into heterosexual homes all over the world. *RuPaul’s Drag Race* airs “in over 90 different countries” and counting; his reach has gone global. And more importantly, so has drags.

But Ru’s ultimate contribution to the world of drag isn’t necessarily

found in the pop cultural trail he’s left behind. On the contrary, her real gift to drag requires a little werk to find it. Scattered throughout his career is a blueprint for success on how—not to just make it and survive in show biz—but how to carve your own niche in it. From beginning to end, what RuPaul’s ascension into megastardom has taught those who are willing to listen is that drag *is* a marketable business—you just have to have the **charisma** to sell it, the **uniqueness** to be your own brand, the **nerve** to act on it, and the **talent** to keep seeing past where you are now so you are always on the cusp of reinvention.

That’s how superstars become legends. That’s how you make your art outlive the artist.

In discovering himself, RuPaul discovered that the world is *his* runway.

And we are just living on and for it.



Because we can never get enough of RuPaul, here's a **Ru-bonus!** A little **sneak peek** into what's sure to be the hottest season of *RuPaul's Drag Race* yet!

GAG: Whose opinions do you trust most when it comes to evaluating a new artist?

RuPaul: I trust my gut.

GAG: What is most rewarding in nurturing new talent?

RuPaul: Introducing these brilliant, courageous queens to the rest of the world. RDR airs in over 90 different countries and my girls perform all over the globe.

GAG: Which aspects of your job are the most difficult?

RuPaul: Saying "sashay away" to

a contestant after she lip syncs for her life.

GAG: What can we expect from this season?

RuPaul: This year the contestants are edgier and not afraid to look not so pretty.

GAG: Who's surprised you in this season of RuPaul's Drag Race?

RuPaul: Each of the contestants were handpicked by me based on the potential I saw in their audition. Without giving away any too much, I'm not surprised by any of them, I think they are all genius.

GAG: What can we expect to see from contestants this season?

RuPaul: The queens are younger and more ambitious. They have no qualms about appearing ruthless in their quest to win.

GAG: How can they step up their drag game?

RuPaul: All of the contestants are the top American "showgirls" working today, but they could really take it to the next level by learning how to articulate their thoughts and learning diplomacy.

GAG: What advice would you give to rising young talents of the future?

RuPaul: Learn your craft. Know thy self.

Can I get an amen?!

“THE SECRET OF SUCCESS IN EVERY FIELD IS REDEFINING WHAT SUCCESS MEANS TO YOU. IT CAN’T BE YOUR PARENT’S DEFINITION, THE MEDIA’S DEFINITION OR YOUR NEIGHBOR’S DEFINITION. OTHERWISE, SUCCESS WILL NEVER SATISFY YOU. PERSONALLY, I EXPERIENCE SUCCESS WHEN I ENJOY WHAT I’M DOING. I LOVE THE CREATIVE PROCESS EVEN IF THE END RESULT ISN’T EMBRACED BY ANYONE ELSE.”