

# I kissed a girl with Dannii Minogue

**ELLA GAUCI TALKS** to the queer icon about her new sapphic dating show, allyship and *that* Mardi Gras performance

**Picture this. It's 1998. Sydney Mardi Gras. Dannii Minogue is surrounded by a sea of scantily clad sapphics who are all gyrating, jumping and swaying while she sings the hit song All I Wanna Do. It's the first time in Mardi Gras' history where the stage has been dominated by queer women. For Dannii, it is a once-in-a-lifetime moment, but it is also tinged with melancholy.**

"I was honoured to do it, but I felt so sad that the girls hadn't gone up there before," she tells me, as she gets ready for the official screening of her new BBC Three show *I Kissed A Girl*.

Her infamous all-girls performance at Mardi Gras was not the first, and certainly not the last time that Dannii has proved herself to be the epitome of an ally. Only the week before our interview, Dannii pretty much sent an earthquake of queer panic through the DIVA Awards when she walked onstage to present a special honour to none other than a speechless Heather Peace. "It was like a G-A-Y concert!" she gushes. "Suddenly, all the phones in the room were up."

Throughout her career, the UK has been honoured by the presence of the Aussie star. From *X Factor* to Britain & Ireland's *Next Top Model*, Dannii has been blessing our screens. And earlier in May, we got a very special sapphic surprise with the release of her new show *I Kissed A Girl*. Yep, that's right, Dannii is once again at the helm of a groundbreaking new project that's all about the girls.

After the success of BBC Three queer dating show *I Kissed A Boy*, the Aussie superstar is back to play

Cupid, and this time sapphics are taking centre stage. Set for a summer of love, *I Kissed A Girl* welcomes 10 hot sapphic singles into Dannii's Italian Massaria for an experience like no other. Oh, and as the name suggests, it involves a lot of smooching.

After decades of calling for a sapphic dating TV show, our prayers have finally been answered. "There's more at stake here for the girls," Dannii explains. "There really hasn't been a lot of representation on TV, films, movies, drama – just everything. These are real women. It isn't anything scripted. Yes, the boys' series was groundbreaking. But we do see the gay guys a lot. There's so much that this show is going to do. I don't think we can understand all of it right now."

It's not an understatement to call the show utterly trailblazing. For one of the first times in reality television, we see queer women not only getting it on, but also having heartfelt conversations about labels, identity and navigating coming out. Amid the drama and emotional chats, Dannii's role is to be what she describes as a "crazy fairy godmother dropping glitter bombs" wherever she goes.

For sapphics, this is the type of

show that has, for decades, never seemed possible. No way were they going to put queer women on mainstream TV kissing, flirting and getting all hot and bothered. No way would they do it in a way that was not only respectful but also celebratory. But for Dannii, these obstacles have always seemed futile.

Allyship has long been something that's come naturally to Dannii. Growing up in the entertainment industry, she was surrounded by the LGBTQIA community. She found herself drawn to people living as their most authentic selves, especially if some sparkles and glitter were involved.

What makes Dannii stand out as a queer icon is her truly lifelong commitment to the LGBTQIA community. She was the first celebrity to perform at G-A-Y back in the 90s, a time when the idea of being associated with the queer community was seen as a career-ending move. Fast forward three decades, and she's still just as vocal about championing the LGBTQIA community.

So what does allyship mean to Dannii? "Making sure that you always show up for someone and stand up for someone," she explains. "If something needs to be said, be that person, even if it's uncomfortable."

As sapphics watch themselves represented in all their glory on *I Kissed A Girl* this summer, it's imperative that we remember how vital visibility is. "We all need to be seen. All of us," Dannii smiles. "Women have been the last on the list." **D**

You can watch *I Kissed A Girl* on BBC iPlayer now

## Dating advice from Dannii Minogue aka Cupid

“The most important thing is the more comfortable you are with yourself, the better chance you have at any relationship. To have that knowingness about yourself. Know yourself. And get that comfort zone with yourself.”

Photo Corinne Cumming

“We all need  
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