Keeping up with the Sliema Girls

In an exclusive interview with IGGY FENECH, Sliema's most famous girls, Cikka and Bex, tell us how they got into acting, why you should go see The Comedy Knights, and the real reason behind Sunita Mukhi's CHOGM handbags

Cikka (Pia Zammit) and Bex (Jo Caruana) during a previous edition of the Comedy Knights stage show • Photo by Rebecca Galea Urpani

AS I sit outside Giorgio's in Sliema – the haunt of Sliema girls and posh people-watchers – I am struck by the fact that I have no idea what to ask Bex and Cikka. These women are superstars: their one-liners the catchphrases of tomorrow's generation...

Suddenly, I spot them walking down Triq ix-Xatt with poise normally mastered by film stars and royalty. Their hair billows in the wind, as the charms on their Michael Kors and Longchamp (canvas, not leather) bags swing from side to side.

As they get to the café, they remove their Carrera sunglasses in such a synchronised motion, I start to wonder if they've been practicing it at home.

"Who are we meant to be meeting, Cik?" Bex asks.

"Boq, some journalist guy. Ziggy I think he said... From Saviour's magazine or TV station or something," Cikka replies.

"Iggy," I interject. Both jump and turn around. "Hi... Shall we take a seat?"

As they order their lattes, I decide to stick to my espresso, and the conversation quickly turns to shopping, and about how Jeremy broke Cikka's heart multiple times. "She was distraught," Bex tells me. "And she... she even looked dreadful for two whole hours, ma!"

I still don't know who Jeremy is, but I thought it best not to ask.

Two hours and four lattes later, they announce they have to go to down to Cynthia, their hairdresser. I panicked and remembered I had to do an interview. And this is what went down.

Many people know you as Sliema's top socialites. How does it feel to go from that to acting?

Cikka: Every year these Comedy Knights people ask us to appear and we don't like to say no. Because we bring an element of sophistication to the proceedings, ej?

Bex: I think...

Cikka You think, Bex? Ma, how clever you are.

Bex: I know, ej?!

What do you think of the Comedy Knights? Which one's your favourite?

Bex I enjoy it. They are very funny. Obviously my most favourite is us, hux? We are the best ones.

Cikka: Mhux ovja maaa.

Bex: You know who my least favourite one is? That one x'jismu? He speaks strange?

Cikka: I like him.

Bex: I used to like him, too. Then I found out that his dad... is... maaa... working class!

Cikka: U ejja?

Bex: Mela!

Cikka: U ejja?

Bex: Mela!

Cikka: U ejja?

Bex: Mela!

Cikka: What were we talking about again?

Bex: I don't know.

Right... What do you think a woman's role is in the modern world?

Bex: Roll? Yaqq, you think we eat rolls? You are very much mistaken.

Cikka: Chicken avocado wrap jew xejn.

Bex: Ah. Washed down with a soy chai latte.

Cikka: Talking of food, you know, once Jeremy congratulated me on my pastizz... But I've never made them.

Bex: How funny, ej?

What do you think of the Sunita Mukhi handbags handed out during CHOGM?

Cikka: I think they are quite hamallu yaqq. Too shiny.

Bex: But, I think, they are supposed to be ironic. Like a joke.

Cikka: Bex, let's do our joke. The funny one.

Bex: Ok. Knock knock.

Cikka: Knock knock? Mela you don't have a doorbell?

Bex: Maaaa, you kill me

Cikka: I know! I kill me too!

Erm... What do you think about the fact that your catchphrase has caught on so much?

Cikka: We have a catchphrase? U ejja?

Bex: Mela!

Cikka: U ejja?

Bex: Mela!

Cikka: U ejja?

Bex: Mela!

Cikka: What is it?

Bex: I'm not sure.

Do you have any role models in acting? If so, who?

Bex: Dan... moħħu fir-rolls!

Cikka: We don't like rolls. We've told you already.

Bex: Pleb.

Okay... Why should people come see the Comedy Knights, then?

Cikka: Ħeqq ara. Because of us hux.

Bex: That is right. This is a big opportunity to learn all about how to be classy and sophisticated. Real Sliema girls. We'll even talk to you after the show.

Cikka: But only if you have a proper job like. You know, if you are a lawyer or something.

Bex: Or if you have a boat.

How shall I quote you?

Bex: The Sliema girls. Sassy sophisticated and so much more.

Cikka: U ejja?

Bex: Mela!

The Comedy Knights' Three Times Funnier powered by XFM will return to the Salesians Theatre from December 26 until January 4, excluding New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Tickets, which also include free parking, can be purchased from www.ticketline.com.mt and start from just €10

The worthy

On show at Mdina's Cathedral Museum as part of the silent city's ongoing Biennale, Gulja Holland's powerful paintings – under the banner of 'Dreams of a Child' – place the most harrowing victims of war front and centre. TEODOR RELJIC speaks to the young artist about how and why she set about depicting the suffering of children during wartime, negotiating the conceptual minefield of her artistic education in the UK, and what's in store for her in the near future

Given that spirituality is the theme of the Mdina Biennale – what kind of prompts does this theme serve to you? Are you inspired to create art associated to spirituality in some way, and if so, how do you approach it?

At the Biennale, my work tackles with the theme of spirituality directly. I wanted the audience to think about the relationship between religion and spirituality, since the theme also encompassed Christianity and the 'Other'. The victims of any religiously motivated war are considered non-believers of the opposing dogma and therefore not treated or recognised as spiritual human beings. This is my interpretation of the 'other'. For many religious people religion and spirituality

Holland next to her exhibition space at the Cathedral Museum, Mdina • Photo by Lukas Schepers