

BBC Proms 2009

By Victoria Ford

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It's all in the Mind of... Vivica Genaux

Alaska-born mezzo-soprano Vivica Genaux is consistently praised for her brilliant performances on the world's great musical stages, not only for technical command and beauty of her distinctive voice, but also for her compelling character portrayals. Hailed as one of the foremost interpreters of Baroque and *bel canto* music, her interest and performances of this repertoire is constantly expanding. She made her acting debut with a cameo appearance in *Fracture*, starring Ryan Gosling and Rosamund Pike, which was released internationally in the Spring of 2007. Tonight she sings arias from Rossini's *La donna del lago* and *La Cenerentola*.

Q. What are you currently reading?

A. Douglas Adams' *The Salmon of Doubt*

Q. Who inspires you musically?

A. A lot of people, I suppose. I like almost every style of music, so it would be hard to pin down one artist or group who inspires me in particular.

Q. What's your favourite city, and why?

A. I really like New York City, it used to be too frenetic for me but now I really enjoy the energy and the people. I love the fact that Broadway has been closed to traffic at Times Square—it's a great place to people-watch! I also really like Paris for the architecture and the museums.

Q. What young artist are you keeping an eye on?

A. None in particular at the moment.

Q. Who would you like to get stuck in an elevator with?

A. My husband!!!!

Q. Where is the strangest place you've ever performed?

A. I've performed in a lot of exotic, beautiful places, but none that I would consider "strange"... yet!

Q. What piece of music can you not live without?

A. Every single song by ABBA.

Q. What food can you not live without?

A. Meat! I'm a die-hard carnivore.

Q. Where is your favourite spot in London?

A. I haven't actually been to London often enough to pick a favourite spot- maybe I'll be able to answer that question after this next visit!

Q. If you were invisible for a day, what would be the first thing you'd do?

A. Ooooooh, now that's a question for me! I love being in places like Amsterdam where there are no curtains and you can walk around in the evenings and see into other people's homes. Every time I see a door or a curtained window I wonder what's behind it. When I go to museums I'm curious to see all the rooms that are off-limits to the public. Probably if I were invisible I would run around the entire day looking at as many homes, museums, and national monuments as possible, but I'd have to be allowed to walk through walls too so I could go where I'm not supposed to be!

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