

Sex-positive and shameless, Shirley is definitely on Santa's naughty list

Shawn Connor - Published on: December 7, 2016

In 2012, Shirley Gnome's career began in earnest with her surprise win at a local comedy competition. Now, after bringing her risqué, NSFW material to audiences around the world, the Vancouver-based singer is ready to take her talents to the next level. After releasing three records (*Ho Down*, *C*untry Music*, and *The Lady of the Night*) on her own, Gnome is making a record for an actual label (Vancouver's 604 Records). Meanwhile, as of this writing, Gnome was about to venture south to perform at two live broadcasts (in Seattle and Portland) of Dan Savage's *Savage Lovecast*, the most popular podcast on sexuality. We talked to the songsmith behind *Hooker*, *Hipster Vagina*, and *Horrible Sex Dream* (to name just a few) about *Savage*, sex and Santa.



Q: So, the story is that the first time you were asked to do the Dan Savage podcast, you couldn't because of a prior commitment, which ended up being one of your worst shows.

A: Yeah. I think it was just a poor decision of what to use for entertainment that night (at a bar in the Kelowna ski resort Big White). Their crowd want a DJ, they wanted to dance and drink, and they had to sit there and wait for me to do my hour of singing. It wasn't like the audience was mean or bad, they just didn't want what they were getting (laughs). It was like a heckle-fest, and it was very tiring.

Q: You must've been excited when the *Savage Lovecast* asked you back.

A: Absolutely. When the producer wrote back to me after I had been unable to do the one two years ago, she said, "We'll get you eventually." So I had this hope. I didn't think it would take this long! And I certainly had moments, in the wee hours, where I was going, "Are they ever going to call me back? Is this something I'm going to regret?"

Q: So, sex. Why is it your prime subject matter?

A: I've always thought it was the most hilarious thing. It's this very primal-based universal drive that we all have that expresses itself in hilarious ways within whatever social construct we happen to be living in. I also kind of have never really felt the shame other women might feel about their sexuality. I wonder if my mom dropped me on my head and broke that part of my brain. I've always been pretty shameless. And I've never seen what the fuss was about. When I started writing songs, I noticed that a lot of people were closed up about sex stuff. I thought it would be better to laugh at it, to show that it's okay and quite common to worry about certain sexual things and urges and desires and experiences that are so much more common than we believe they are. That can lend itself to a lot of humour, and humour can be very freeing. I didn't really think that my whole career would lead that way when I started writing songs and playing guitar, but people respond to it so strongly, and it's such a nice thing to be able to make people laugh at sexuality.

Q: Is there anything Christmas-y that we can expect from the *Havana* show? Does it uphold family values?

A: I only have one Christmas song right now. It's called *I Hate Christmas*, and it's about rejecting consumerism to save your time for intercourse.