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Cyndi Lauper Proves That She Still Can Surprise—and Definitely Have Fun—in the August/September Issue of AARP The Magazine

While celebrating the release of her latest musical adventure—a country album—pop icon Cyndi Lauper shares her secrets for reinvention and why rules, especially about aging, just don't apply

WASHINGTON, DC — At age 63, Cyndi Lauper is still that girl with edge who just wants to have fun. She remains an entertainment powerhouse whose secret to success is not giving a “hoot,” remaining true to herself and her unconventional artistic vision.

In the August/September issue of *AARP The Magazine*, a pink-haired Lauper opens up about her personal life, including an abusive childhood, and provides details about her remarkable career, spanning pop rock, new wave, blues, Broadway and, most recently, a recording of country standards.

Her notable work doesn't end with music, but includes forays into acting, performance art, and human rights activism. This 80s icon is a devoted wife, mother and musical artist that has survived personal and professional hardships and is fiercely determined to remain open to the new and to be defined only by herself.

The following are excerpts from the August/September issue of the *AARP The Magazine* cover story featuring Cyndi Lauper, available in homes today and online now at www.aarp.org/magazine/.

On being true to herself and staying power

“Don't listen. I find it remarkable when the ‘industry people’ try to pigeonhole you, like they know. Even me, I don't know what I can do. I want to be great, but I don't know if I can be great, so I just have to keep trying.”

“You can't live your whole life worrying about staying famous. If losing some fame means doing what you want, you gotta go with what you want.”

“They can say what they want [about my legacy]. They've been saying everything anyway. I don't give a hoot. I am who I am. I don't apologize for any of it. But I do hope that what I do in my art inspires people—that it makes 'em happy and makes 'em think.”

“I wouldn't listen to the naysayers and haters. Who cares? The people who succeed are the people who don't quit.”

“I wanna hear everything and keep learning about music. If I'm gonna invest my time, I want it to be great, because that's what I'm leaving behind, besides the human beings I adore.”

“I had a dream one time. I climbed the ladder and then let the ladder fall because I couldn't just stand where I was. I wanted to be my own artist, to sing the rhythm of my own speech.”

On the virtues of aging the way you want to

“Age has nothing to do with it. You'll get wherever it is you want to go at whatever time in your life you want to do it.”

“I think I have reached an age when I can have pink hair if I want—or blue hair. But blue, it turns a little green, so right now I am going with the pink.”

“We are brainwashed about what age you're supposed to marry, what age you're supposed to have a kid, what age you're supposed to do this or that. Oh my god! Who died and left those people in charge?”

On her financial regrets

“I was never smart about money like Prince. I wish I wasn't taken advantage of so much.”

On learning to believe in yourself

Lauper's manager told her, “You'll never be as big as you were.” Yet she refused to fire him. “Why didn't I say, ‘If you don't believe in me, you shouldn't be working for me’? I couldn't. He had a family. And I guess there were times I didn't think I was worthy either, because I was always told I was a pain in the ass, and why can't I just stand there and sing?”

On her aspiring hip-hop artist son's refusal to take her advice

"I love my kid so f---ing much, I can't take it." Yet for Lauper, the main issue at the moment is that, though her son is an aspiring hip-hop artist, he refuses to take her advice. Still, she's sanguine. "I'd get mad when people gave me advice, too. I still do. I'll ask my husband what he thinks of what I'm wearing, and he'll say, 'I don't really like it,' and I'll wear it anyway. So why ask the poor bastard?"

On a North Carolina law banning transgender from using the facility with which they identify

"Where I come from, you don't let your friends and family be stripped of their civil rights." But unlike other artists, including Bruce Springsteen, who canceled their concerts in the state, Lauper went ahead with her Raleigh, North Carolina show and donated the proceeds to a local LGBT charity. "Just my money," she adds quickly. "Set people, electricians—all those guys need to get paid."

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About AARP The Magazine

With nearly 36 million readers, *AARP The Magazine* is the world's largest circulation magazine and the definitive lifestyle publication for Americans 50+. *AARP The Magazine* delivers comprehensive content through health and fitness features, financial guidance, consumer interest information and tips, celebrity interviews, and book and movie reviews. *AARP The Magazine* was founded in 1958 and is published bimonthly in print and continually online. Learn more at www.aarp.org/magazine/. Twitter: twitter.com/AARP

About AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million that helps people turn their goals and dreams into 'Real Possibilities' by changing the way America defines aging. With staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and promote the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare security, financial security and personal fulfillment. AARP also advocates for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the world's largest circulation magazine, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @aarp and our CEO @JoAnn_Jenkins on Twitter.

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