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# SISTER



## Supersister talk to Paul Donnelley

In the late 1990s the music business decided that girl groups were where it was at. The manufactured Spice Girls were hugely popular and so record companies set out to replicate that success by manufacturing other girl bands. Girlthing, Twentieth Century Girls, Vanilla – the list seemed endless. The same year (1997) that Supersister was formed almost fifty other girl bands began performing or touring. They have all bit the dust. Supersister – Elle, Louise and Tina – are still with us.

### What were you like as kids?

Tina: Elle and I have known each other since we were seven and eight – we grew up across the road from each other in Sheffield. We were performing at that age – we used to pretend to be the kids from *Fame*. I was Coco and Elle was Leroy. Only because she was stronger than me at that stage and she could lift me up...

Elle: I was three stone heavier you mean...

Tina: We were proper little show-offs doing shows for our mums and dads. We only met Lou four years ago.

Louise: I was quite a shy child but would come out a little bit more when I was doing amateur dramatics when I was 13. My auntie was on the cabaret circuit so she would make me sing. At barbecues and Christmas they made me sing songs and I would only do it if my brother sang with me. We did *I Know Him So Well* by Barbara Dickson and Elaine Paige. I would be Elaine Paige and my brother was Barbara Dickson.

### Who were your musical influences?

Elle: We are all really quite different. I really like Stevie Wonder, old soul music, Bee Gees, Anita Baker but I also love modern stuff like Madonna, Robbie Williams, Kylie Minogue.

Tina: I like everything Elle said but I am into lyrics. I like Elvis Costello, Van Morrison. I love the stories in the songs.

Louise: I like Celine Dion, Whitney Houston – people with big voices. But I also like Steps, Bee Gees, Kylie's old stuff, A1 anything poppy.

### Where did the name originate?

Tina: Supersister is the name of a song written three or four years ago. We did toy around with a few other names but Supersister seemed to stick.

### What separates you from other girl bands?

Elle: It's difficult to answer because we are girls and we are a band. People always criticise girl bands but there are so many guitar bands around but no one ever asks them about other guitar bands. I suppose if we had to narrow it down we would say that we are not manufactured. We put ourselves together through the sheer love of music. We also co-write or write a lot of our music with my brother who Tina goes out with. We hold the strings.

### Who is the joker in the band?

Elle: We all are but I think Lou probably pips us at the post.

Tina: But we all have our moments.

Elle: None of us are practical jokers but Lou is very, very dry but all of us have got a good sense of humour.

Tina: We have just gone through a recent phase of swapping personalities. I am not sure of the science behind it but without a shadow of a doubt we have become homogenised. Elle was me the other night. You spend so much time together, you can't help but absorb the other person's character. People ask us if we are sisters and obviously no, we're not but we behave like sisters. We laugh together, we love, we live together. We do have a laugh. We go to so many roadshows and we see so many other bands who are so unhappy because they have been thrown together. We feel sorry for them because they can't say what they want to say to the other person and we can say what we want, have the best laugh.



Louise



Tina



Elle

**What is your favourite own song?**

Louise: *Coffee* because we have been touring around with it for a year and a half but I still get the same buzz from the first time we sang it.

**Are there any songs that evoke romantic memories?**

Louise: *Say My Name* by Destiny's Child reminds me of a certain relationship.

Tina: I have one that doesn't remind me of any particular man but reminds me of being a lovestruck teenager and wanting a knight in shining armour and that's *Take My Breath Away* from *Top Gun*. That song is heart-renderingly romantic. What a talented person wrote that. I also like *Eternal Flame* by the Bangles which is so perfect for teenage girls.

Elle: I immediately go back to when I was about 16 and *Crazy for You* by Madonna. I remember buying it and playing it over and over again. I can't even remember who I was heartbroken about now.

Tina: I remember James Wildgoose once wrote out the lyrics to LL Cool J's *I Need Love* for me, another great song which gets it just right for the kids.

Louise: Another for me is *You'll Never Walk Alone*. I know it's what the Kop sing but listen to the words, it is such a beautiful, beautiful song. It's by Gerry and the Pacemakers and it is just fantastic.

**Do boyfriends help or hinder a band like Supersister?**

Tina: Mine certainly helps because he writes for us and co-writes with us. He certainly helps in a business sense. In a practical sense they have a lot to deal with - their girlfriends are often away, on telly, meeting people...

Elle: They've named themselves Manzone. They all know each other. Sean's my brother and I've been going out with my boyfriend for five years. Lou's been going out with her boyfriend a year. They are all ex-boxers but they do different things and as Tina says we all appreciate how hard they've had it.

Tina: I can't be naughty because I'm out there with his sister all the time!

Louise: I was already in the band when I met Charlie so he had to accept things because that's how they are. He is ever so good.

**What sort of underwear should men buy you to impress you?**

Tina: I like a man in a pair of Calvin Klein's. For me just to buy me a present will do, I'll not complain as long as they give me the receipt and I can change it if I don't like it.

Louise: If they get my bra size right that's absolutely fantastic.

Elle: I have never ever been bought underwear by a boyfriend so anything will do.

**G-strings, thongs, knickers or big pants?**

All: G-strings.

**What do you wear in bed?**

Louise: If I am with my boyfriend, nothing. If I am in a hotel I wear my Calvin Klein pyjamas.

Tina: A nightdress or maybe just knickers and bra.

Elle: I get too cold to wear nothing. I have to wear a nightie or a big baggy jumper.

**Who do you admire?**

Louise: People like Kylie, Madonna. It's really difficult to be a soloist. Madonna is so innovative and can raise a family. Kylie has come back from her career plummeting to be number 1 again.

Elle: I'm struggling. I need more time to answer. I'd probably say Stevie Wonder. He writes the most fantastic album.

Tina: I agree with everything they've just said but would add Paul McCartney.

**Where do you see yourselves in five year's time?**

Louise: Lying on a beach and stinking rich.

Tina: I'd like kids in five years. I'd like a huge fantastic career behind me with one, maybe two number albums under our belt.

Elle: I see Supersister being successful. I see kids and involvement in some way in music...

