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Eddie Izzard says 'trans rights are human rights. End of story' as he stars in Doctor Jekyll remake

Eddie Izzard - who also goes by the name Suzy - is playing her first lead transgender role in Hammer horror Doctor Jekyll, a retelling of Robert Louis Stevenson's much-loved Victorian novel.



Bethany Minelle

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Eddie Izzard at the world premiere of Doctor Jekyll in London



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Eddie Izzard says the majority of people she meets on the streets are "positive" and "accepting" of her as a transgender woman.

The comedian and actor, who also goes by the name Suzy, first came out as trans back in 1985.

Now, nearly 40 years later, Eddie is taking on her first lead trans role in Hammer horror Doctor Jekyll.

But while society may be in a very different place to the turbulent mid-80s, with much more understanding around LGBTQ+ issues, Eddie says it's not all plain sailing.

"The world is more accepting. The extreme right is not more accepting. The extreme right is setting up culture wars. But most people in the streets... they're saying, 'Good for you, be your authentic self. I think you're looking great,' and hopefully I'm looking okay."

She says the majority of people

display a "live and let live" attitude, recognising it as an "honest" expression of "what's inside".

She goes on: "And we're talking about mental health and the wellbeing of people, societies, our communities, our country, our continent, our world. Surely this has got to be better than where the right wing are saying, 'No, set women's rights against trans rights. Have them fight now'?"

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"No, women's rights are human rights and trans rights are human rights. End of story."

Izzard stars as trans woman Doctor Jekyll

With trans issues a hot-button topic right now, they are conversations Eddie is likely to have with potential voters - as aside from performing and extreme sports, Eddie is also politically active.

She is standing to be Labour's parliamentary candidate for Brighton Pavilion (she was unsuccessful last year in her bid to

become Labour's candidate for Sheffield Central).

She remains clear that the overall message on the street is one of support: "There are some people who are hateful, some people are transphobic, but they are a minority and maybe things are spiking at the moment, but we will pass through this time and then we will get to better times in the future."

A sign of such change, with trans issues starting to make their way into mainstream media, is the 61-year-old's latest project - a retelling of Robert Louis Stevenson's novella *The Strange Case Of Dr Jekyll And Mr Hyde*, in which Dr Jekyll is a trans woman.

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Directed by Joe Stephenson, Eddie says it was an open-gender casting and both men and women were seen for the part.

And while it was a challenge playing two roles in one, she says the fact that scientist Nina Jekyll was trans

was incidental to the role.

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"As an acting role it's fantastic because hopefully, as people are watching the scenes, they can't quite tell who is controlling this trans woman, which way she going. But the fact that she's trans, it doesn't matter. It's just happens to be there."

Now, in the 21st century, we should be beyond lazy stereotyping, Izzard says, citing LGBTQ casting as a case in point.

"[Often] if you're a gay character, you've got to have a gay problem. With a lesbian, have a lesbian

problem. No, you don't have to do that. Just have a life because we're all living lives, we're all real people."

Doctor Jekyll is in cinemas now.

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