

The wizard of odd

Darren McMullen sets off to meet some far from ordinary folk...

Outsiders With Darren McMullen
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FACTUAL

As host of BBC1's *The Magicians* Darren McMullen must be well used to strange sights. Which is why this new six-part show sees the Scottish-born presenter travel across Europe to meet people on the fringes of society, as he tries to gain an insight into their often unusual worlds.

'I'm trying in a non-judgmental way to see what makes them tick,' explains Darren. 'I didn't want to make fun of them, and I do try and see things through their eyes.'

The opening episode finds him meeting 71-year-old prostitutes the Fokkens sisters in Amsterdam's red light district. They give him an idea of what life as a working

girl is like. Then he's off to Croatia to meet the Raelians, a sect who believe that humans were created by aliens, while in Weymouth, he hits the streets with a 'ninja'.

'I was excited about meeting the Raelians, because I'd had run-ins with them from a young age in Las Vegas,' says Darren.

Later in the series he tries oil wrestling in Turkey, medieval farming in Romania, and the hybrid sport of chess boxing in London. He takes a ride in a coffin at the Near Death

Experience Festival in Spain, and goes to a gathering of My Little Pony fans, mainly grown men known as 'bronies', in Manchester.

'Of all the groups we met, the bronies probably attract the most negative attention,' he says. 'A lot of them have struggled their whole lives to

be accepted and they have found a group of people willing to take them in, no matter what. Their slogan is "Friendship is magic".'

He confesses that it's the most painful show he's ever done.

'My chess boxing trainer broke two of my ribs, I nearly had my nose cut off by medieval knights, a ninja almost broke my neck, and I was molested by twin 71-year-old prostitutes!'

Nick Fiaca

'My nose almost got cut off!'



71-year-old prostitutes the Fokkens



Darren tastes life as a 'brony'

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