

Brighton drag queen jailed for planning sex session

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By Neil Vowles

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Robert Clothier, who was director of Brighton's famous Alternative Panto, was arrested at a London train station with an Easter egg, a Lego toy, a box

of chocolate flavoured glow-in-the-dark condoms and pink children's underwear from Primark.

The 37-year-old was caught while en route to what he thought was a liaison with a fellow paedophile and two children aged eight and 11.

Clothier, of Windlesham Road, Brighton, stepped down as Pride chairman in 2010 and was also director of the Alternative Panto for two years before quitting last year.

Former panto colleagues said the city's gay community was still shocked by Clothier's crimes for which he was jailed for 26 months yesterday at Southwark Crown Court.

Clothier, who goes by the stage name Lady James, confessed in a series of online chats last March to having "naughty thoughts" about his own nieces and nephews but had never acted upon them as he did not want to "hurt his family".

He told the court he was "turned on" while purchasing the pink underwear and had chosen a particular set because it was "sexy".

Prosecutor Mervyn Burton told the court how Clothier described being constantly aroused while thinking about the children and how he was excited and honoured to meet them, and hoped it would not be "just a one off".

Officers found a string of child porn images, including 18 cartoon images of fathers abusing their sons, when they raided his Brighton home.



Alternative Panto founder Brian Ralfe: "I was completely and utterly in shock and everybody I have spoken to about him since could hardly believe it.

"I always thought he was a nice guy, he did good work for me and I always held him in high esteem."

Gareth Morgan, defending Clothier, said he had a "troubled background" which led to him developing an interest in "liaisons with what he considers father figures".

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he very much doubts he would have done anything with them."



Clothier admitted arranging or facilitating the commission of a child sex offence, making indecent images of children, distributing images of children and possessing prohibited images of children.

Judge Taylor ordered that Clothier's computer should be forfeited and destroyed and he be made subject to a Sexual Offences Prevention Order restricting his access to children under 16 and internet use.

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