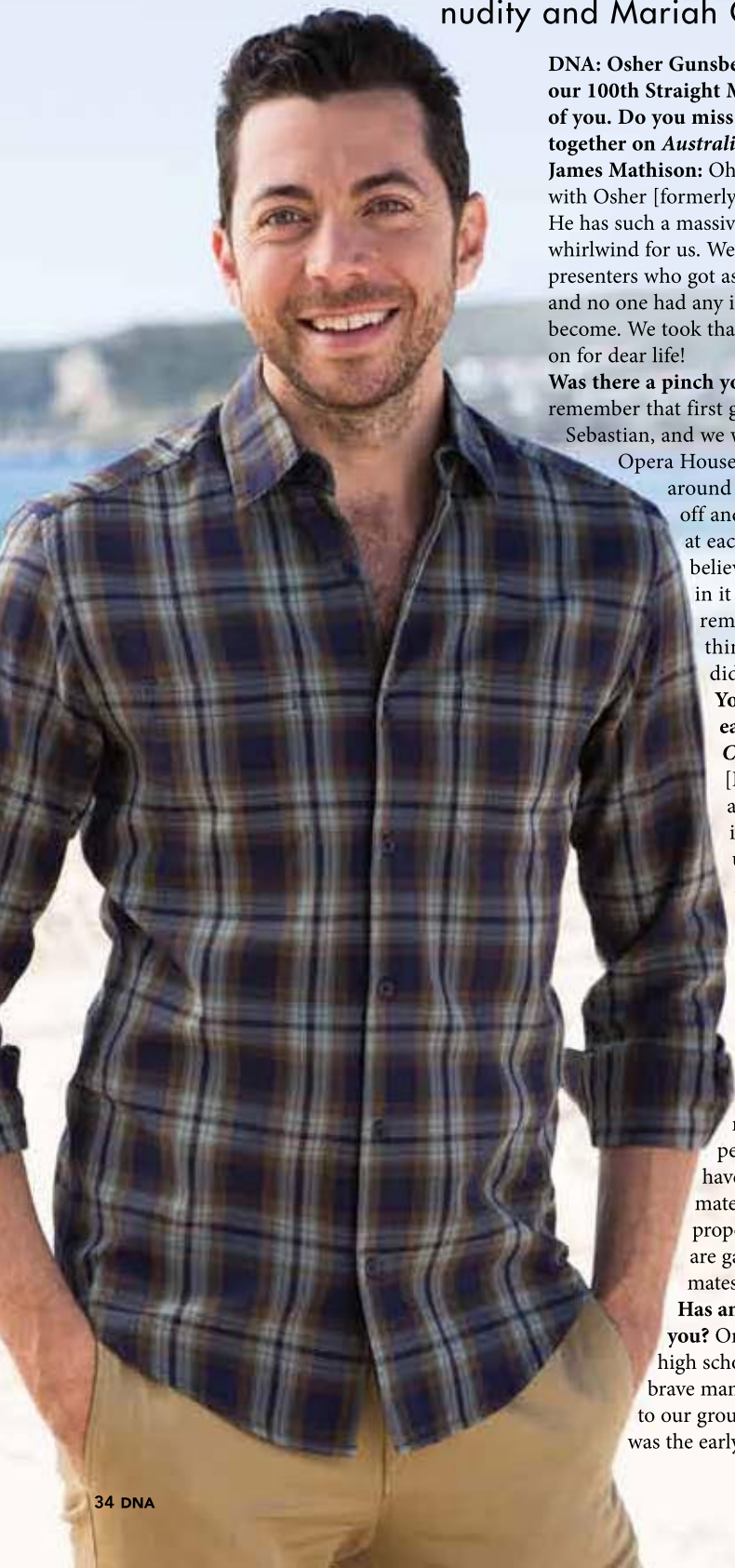


Morning, James!

Lots of Australians are waking up with James Mathison. No, he's not a man-whore, he's hosting morning TV's *Wake Up*. Matthew Myers gets the scoop on James' public nudity and Mariah Carey's fluffer...



DNA: Osher Gunsberg, who was recently our 100th Straight Mate, spoke very highly of you. Do you miss your days working together on *Australian Idol*?

James Mathison: Oh man. I loved working with Osher [formerly known as Andrew G]. He has such a massive heart and it was a real whirlwind for us. We were young cable TV presenters who got asked to do *Australian Idol*, and no one had any idea how huge it would become. We took that ride together and held on for dear life!

Was there a pinch yourself moment? I remember that first grand final with Guy Sebastian, and we were standing on the

Opera House steps, with 5,000 people around us. The crowd was going off and Osher and I just looked at each other. We couldn't believe that we were involved in it all. I can distinctly remember that moment and thinking, "Holy shit, how did we get here?"

You also competed against each other on *Ready Steady Cook* – and you won!

[Laughing] Yeah, I had a dish with a lot of meat in it. I knew that going up against a vegan, and having the public voting on it... well, it was never going to end well for Osher!

Do you have many gay mates? Absolutely. I'd be surprised if you spoke to anyone who didn't.

It's like saying are you mates with any blonde people. Doesn't everyone have gay friends? I've got gay mates, gay cousins... a large proportion of my workmates are gay. I've got a few straight mates, too! [laughs]

Has anyone ever come out to you? One of my best friends in high school, Michael, was a very brave man. At about 16, he confided to our group that he was gay. It was the early 1990s and an all-boy

Catholic school. That was a great first insight into looking at a friend's different sexuality... I mean, that's what mateship is all about.

Have you ever been mistaken as gay? Oh yeah, have you seen me? Thin and neat! I lived in Darlinghurst for a long time, too, so I think a few people made that assumption. I'm not the manliest man you'll ever meet [laughs].

If you were gay, who would you go for?

Clive Owen is very attractive. I think there's also something quite fascinating about Javier Bardem's face as well. He's a real alpha male.

So who is your diva? Adele. She's cheeky, she's sassy, has a mouth like a sailor and the most wonderful voice imaginable. She sung *Somebody Like You* at the 2011 Brit Awards and I think that was one of the greatest award show performances of all time! When you look at Miley Cyrus twerking with Robin Thicke at the VMAs and then look at Adele at the Brit Awards, one is classic and one is classless.

What's the campest band you're into? I'm afraid ABBA leave me cold, but I'm into Scissor Sisters and I like Mika, too. I'm a massive fan of his. Is he still around?

Yeah, and he came out too. Wow! I've fallen off the pop culture radar!

You've interviewed a lot of famous musicians. Who was your strangest?

Mariah Carey was probably the battiest interview I've ever done. I interviewed her in London just after *Glitter* had come out. I walked in and she had about 20 attendants. She had someone doing her hair, someone doing her makeup, someone playing music for her, someone pouring her drink... she was reclining on a chaise lounge and I was asked to sit on what looked like a Louis XVI throne beside her. On her lap she had a Hello Kitty boombox playing different tracks and everything was pink. You talk about someone having a fluffer? There was someone there fluffing the pillow behind her! It was then that I thought okay, we've entered the Mariah Carey twilight zone! She was absolutely lovely but that was a weird half hour in my life.

And the highlight? Having a half-hour one-on-one with an icon like Keith Richards was pretty special. I'm a massive fan, so for me that was an unbelievable experience.

You had a role in the 2006 comedy film *BoyTown*. Would you ever consider doing more acting? Mate, I was lucky that I got to play myself in that movie. I don't think Australia needs any more bad dramatic acting!

Have you ever had a wardrobe malfunction on air? Being on TV with my fly down counts, yes. And when I covered the Spencer Tunick naked crowd shoot at the Opera House for *The Project* I was completely starkers!

more: Wake Up airs 6.30am to 8.30am Monday to Friday on Network TEN.