



Wicked boy

"I don't mind male attention. It's a bit of fun," says Rob Mills.

Rob Mills became a household name on Australian Idol. Now he's starring in *Wicked* and living the musical theatre dream. From nude scenes to selling his used G-strings, Millsy reveals all to Matt Myers.

DNA: You've played Fiyero in *Wicked* for a year now. What has the experience been like?

Rob Mills: It's a dream come true! I've wanted to play this part for the past three years and now that I'm doing it, it's a great rush. Fiyero is a great character and I get to work with some amazing stars. Bert Newton's joined us and I got to work with Rob Guest before he sadly passed. It's the most amazing time of my life.

So *Grease*, *Hair*, *Wicked* – are there any classic roles you'd like to play?

I'm new to musical theatre and not a massive fan of all the classics, but I do like the new stuff coming out. Things like *Avenue Q*, *Jersey Boys* and *We Will Rock You*. If I were a better dancer, I'd love to play Link in *Hairspray*. I think it's coming here next year

so I'll definitely be auditioning for Corny Collins at least.

You played Claude in the 2007 production of *Hair*. Did you end up going nude?

The part where that happens is where my character sings, "Where do I go? Follow the river..." In most productions they hold up some sort of sheet then drop it as the light goes out. Our director chose to do a silhouette-type walk-on where the light is behind everyone. But I had a mic pack on and it would have been too hard to strip and walk backwards. So I didn't have to do it. They did make me do it in another spot but it was awkward so they cut it!

You work with Maggie Kirkpatrick in *Wicked*, who is best known as Joan 'The Freak' Ferguson on *Prisoner*. Have you ever

watched that show?

No, I've never seen it, and I don't think she likes talking about it too much. She doesn't bring it up, so I choose to avoid it.

***Prisoner* has a big gay cult following.**

I've heard she was a pretty terrifying lady in *Prisoner*. I can tell you now, she's just as terrifying as Madame Morrible in *Wicked!* That's probably why she's got a Helpman nomination. She just owns that character. She has a powerful presence on the stage and is a tremendous actor. Maggie's helped me heaps. She pulls me aside every now and then to give me little tidbits of information. She's been wonderful.

Do you have many gay mates?

Courtney Act, who I met on *Idol*, is one of my good friends and I now have a couple more from working in theatre.

Have you ever been mistaken as gay?

All the time! Maybe more recently because I'm in musical theatre.

Do guys ever hit on you?

[Laughs] Only when I go down Oxford Street!

I don't mind male attention. It's a bit of fun. Gee, I've got to stop flirting with them! Last time I came to Sydney, Shane [Courtney Act] took me to Art Bar where they do a drag show. I also went to the Prince Of Wales in Melbourne for a cast member's birthday. It was great.

There are quite a few Rob Mills

Appreciation Facebook pages set up. How do you feel about that?

Are there? I didn't realise! I'm honoured. That's pretty cool.

You have a great arse. Do you ever get complimented on it?

[Laughs] Mainly when I'm at The Prince Of Wales on a Monday! It might get grabbed a couple of times but I take that as a compliment. Actually, I did a gig for World AIDS Day at The Market on Commercial Road. Everyone was donating money, and some guy said, "I'll give 200 bucks if Millisy flashes his arse." So I was like, "Yeah, no worries." Some guys came up later and said they were the ones who donated the money and that they ran a man spa up the road. They offered me a free day there but I declined.

Apparently you had an interesting time in Mykonos with the elephant G-string man?

Yeah, I was staying in Eos, which is another island in the middle, and someone said, "You've got to see this guy. He's there every year and he dances with an elephant G-string on!" Sure enough, there he was! You're getting a drink and there it is – in your face!

Speaking of G-strings, do you wear a dance belt on stage?

Yeah, I've got a dance support and it's getting washed as we speak. I won't show it to you. I'll wait 'til it's clean, but yeah... [laughs] Nah,

you can't smell it! Maybe at the end of the *Wicked* run. When I get a new one I'll auction it off for DNA!

For charity!

Yep, done!

Who do you still keep in touch with from *Australian Idol*?

I spoke to Shannon Noll a couple of months back as he was heading to London to do *War Of The Worlds*. I was tweeting with Guy Sebastian last week... he's in the States at the moment and I've got to organise some *Wicked* tickets for when he comes back. I bumped into Paulini a little while ago and I still speak to Cleoni, who was also in the top 12.

"If people haven't seen *Wicked* they should. It's exactly the same if not better than Broadway."

Which would you prefer to be a support act for – Kylie, Britney, Pink or Madonna?

Pink for sure! She's rock-and-roll. She's pop. She reinvents herself and speaks her mind. I love her vibe.

How many times have you been to Paris?

Hmm... I actually didn't go there on my European trip. I went to Nice and Cannes but I didn't travel that far north. It's the city of love, so maybe one day!

So what's your porn name (your first pet and the street where you grew up)?

Chester Beaver!

You've done TV, radio and theatre. Does film interest you?

Definitely. I went through a lot of acting lessons before I auditioned for this role and I worked on a couple of different movie-style scripts with my acting teacher. I really enjoyed it. It's so challenging and down the track I'd love to pursue it. But for the moment I'm fully committed to the Sydney run of *Wicked*.

How has the death of Michael Jackson affected you?

I was always a massive fan growing up. In fact, when I was a kid, I used to put on concerts for my family and dance to Michael Jackson tunes for them! I think his death has affected the whole cast. I think everyone was looking forward to his concert tour. He reinvented dance and put it back on the map. I heard the news and just couldn't believe it. He was such an idol to so many people. It's mind-blowing.

Who is the biggest influence on your career?

I guess my manager. She's fantastic and has a great way of realising my potential and pushing me. I also have a really positive group of friends and a great family base. Australia-wise, I think David Campbell and Hugh Jackman are fantastic, and as a kid I always looked up to John Farnham. I admire the way they crossed over from TV and theatre into recording. That's the way I want to continue.

What has been the biggest career highlight for you so far?

This! The opening night was like a dream come true. If people haven't seen *Wicked* they should because it's exactly the same if not better than Broadway and it's much cheaper than buying a ticket to New York!

Wicked is now playing at The Capitol Theatre, Sydney.

