

# One fine **Taye**

**Taye Diggs can sing, dance and act. Here, he holds forth on his inner geek, his shoe addiction, and the challenges of being married**

The '90s was a mixed decade for naked male butts on film.

While the sight of Michael Douglas' pale posterior in *Basic Instinct* caused scores to suffer irreparable retinal damage, the unveiling of Taye Diggs' toned backside in 1998's *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* may have spawned an industry of single women heading for Jamaica in search of some of what Angela Bassett was having. The 34-year-old Diggs — who was actually born in Brooklyn — has proven that the rest of him is just as worthy of worship!

**Q: TELL me about your first crush.**

**A:** Christy, this girl in junior high school. I remember she smelled like coconut.

**Q: So did she know how you felt about her?**

**A:** Yeah. She was way out of my league, but I think she kind of did me a favour because she knew I had a crazy crush on her. One night after soccer practice, she and I were the only people on the school bus and she taught me how to kiss. I was so grateful. But she made it clear that it was a one-time-only thing.

**Q: Way out of Taye Diggs' league? Seems unlikely.**

**A:** If you saw old pictures of me, you'd see that I didn't look like I do now. I was wiry-thin. I had the glasses with the tape on the side and no confidence.

**Q: Who gave you the best piece of advice about women?**

**A:** My mother. She said, "Be yourself, and just wait. They'll catch on once you grow into yourself."

**Q: How was your mom sure you wouldn't be a geek forever?**

**A:** She always knew I was destined for greatness.

**Q: Ever identified romantically with a movie character?**

**A:** Patrick Dempsey in *Can't Buy Me Love*. He was the nerd who made good and ended up with the popular girl.

**Q: Before you met your wife, who was your female ideal?**

**A:** Lucy Liu, because I'd just come back from working in Japan, and I was really into Asian women.

**Q: Anything surprise you about the women in Japan?**

**A:** That they were so into taking care of their men. I've always been attracted to independent women, but the idea that someone could be independent and still kind of put herself second at times was pretty interesting.

**Q: How did you know your wife was the one?**

**A:** I was never a 100 percent comfortable with the women I was hanging with because I was afraid they'd find out that I'm still the same person I was in junior high. With Idina, I didn't have to be ashamed of the nerd inside that came out.

**Q: I've always suspected that on the maintenance scale, Broadway divas would be at the very highest end.**

**A:** Oh God, yeah. If she's warming up, Idina's going to be screaming at the top of her lungs for a couple of hours in our place. Prior to coming over, our friends will always ask whether she's going to be talking or not talking, because we've gone out before when she's on vocal rest and she's brought a pad and written everything down.

**Q: What has been the hardest adjustment of your marriage?**

**A:** She cannot pick up her clothes. I come from a very disciplined household with rules, so I have difficulty comprehending that. She's got a lot of great qualities, but that's not one of them.

**Q: You cried when your wife won a Tony. Ever cry at more inappropriate times?**

**A:** I'm going through a stage where the dumbest things make me bawl. I feel like I need to see a shrink. We were watching *Little Miss Sunshine*, and at the end, the little girl brings the whole family together and they all do this dance onstage at this beauty pageant. It affected me so deeply that I just started crying and could not stop.

**Q: When your wife talks to her friends about you, what do you think she complains about most?**

**A:** It annoys her that I like putting outfits together. She was a tomboy growing up and prefers jeans and a T-shirt. There are times when we go out that I think she feels pressure to step it up.

**Q: Who has more shoes, you or your wife?**

**A:** Me, definitely. But I have more of everything.

**Q: Have you counted them?**

**A:** No, because I'm constantly getting new ones and giving the old ones away. But I must say, it's a tremendous collection.

**Q: Have you bought a piece of clothing so expensive that it was hard for even you to justify?**

**A:** It's never hard for me to do. The only tough thing is admitting to my wife how much a certain article of clothing costs. But it would probably be a Panerai watch.

**Q: How much did that set you back?**

**A:** I'd get in way too much trouble if I told you.

