

Celebrity Interview

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You're obviously comfortable on stage and also doing great work on screen. How do you approach each as an actor?

AM: First, let me say thank you, Harriet. It's great that you saw and enjoyed that play. Stage and screen are completely different. Stage is like a marathon. It's more of a physical muscle because you have to do eight shows a week. With a movie, you do it once, it's in the can, and you move on. On the stage, you have to recreate that moment every night. You have to figure out a way, mentally, to find yourself in the same place every performance. You have to believe that whatever's happening in that world is actually happening every night, whereas with film you just have to believe it once before you move on. So, stage is really difficult but, at the same time, it's much more gratifying than film. So many people have a hand in your screen performance whereas, when you step on the stage, no one tells you what you can and can't do.

KW: Harriet also asks: Do you know what it means to miss New Orleans?

AM: [LOL] That's a great song!

KW: Larry Greenberg says: It seems to me like the film actually has a message about the growing distance between classes in America. Or am I asking too much from a spring blockbuster?

AM: I think the movie deals more with The American Dream, and the skewed perception of it in our generation. The idea used to be that you worked hard to achieve

more. Now, it's "Do as little as you can to achieve as much as you can."

KW: Richie the intern says: You have played Tupac Shakur twice, once, Off-Off Broadway, and also in the film Notorious. Did you listen to a lot of his music growing up?

AM: Definitely! The very first CD I ever owned, was a Tupac CD. He's one of my all-time favorites. I have every CD and bootleg CD of his. He was a

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huge inspiration of mine. Since my parents didn't allow me to hang out on the streets as a child, my way of experiencing the streets was by listening to Tupac.

KW: Patricia says: I loved your performance in Desert Flower, which brings to mind this saying: "There are no small parts, only small actors."

AM: Thank you, Patricia. I agree. That's one of the reasons I did Desert Flower. I feel very strongly about that picture's subject-matter [female circumcision]. So, I did the



Anthony Mackie

advice do you have for them?

AM: [Chuckles] I still meet naysayers every day. This business is funny. It's all about your journey and the road that you're on. There are so many people who like to comment on my career and on what I am or am not doing. But I know that it's my path, and I'm going to decide for myself which direction I want to go. When I meet naysayers, I just thank them politely for acknowledging my career and I wish them many blessings on the success of their own careers.

KW: Marcia Evans says: I have been following your career and I appreciate the choices you have made as an artist. Do you have any interest in bringing any historical or cultural stories about Louisiana to the screen?

AM: Of course! One of the biggest projects I've been working on, for about six years now, has been a movie about the jazz musician Buddy Bolden. Louisiana is near and dear to my heart. I moved back to New

Orleans five years ago, because I realize that New Orleans is what made me into something that I cherish.

KW: Are you attached to any post-Katrina rehabilitation project in New Orleans?

AM: No, I've been staying away from the revitalization of New Orleans, because it's not New Orleanians who are behind it. And that's the problem. Every time a New Orleanian tries to get behind a project, it gets shot down. But you have all these folks from outside the state trying to change the culture. That's what the backlash is all about right now. We want to keep the city the way it was. New Orleans is not New York, L.A. or Las Vegas, and we want to push all the outsiders out in order to get back to where we were before Hurricane Katrina.

KW: Marcia then asks: Do you know how to make noise in the kitchen?

AM: I'll say this: I've never met a woman who wasn't somebody's momma who could cook better than me.

KW: What is your favorite dish to cook?

AM: My #1 killer dish is stuffed prawns with crabmeat dressing over teriyaki rice with pan-fried asparagus. That's my game-over, you know you're in for the night, you're in trouble situation dish.

KW: Mike Pittman asks: What was your wisest career move?

AM: Not doing a TV show.

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