



'I'VE NEVER been *that* guy... You know, the one who's always wanted to have a quiet, subtle life,' says openly gay singer Adam Lambert

## Shy Adam Lambert comes to town

The 'American Idol' runner-up shares his views on gays on TV and the 'closed-minded'

BY ELIO IANNACCI • Adam Lambert is not a fan of the phrase "less is more." Sitting in an office at a Toronto radio station, the 28-year-old *American Idol* runner-up has just undergone his seventh makeup application for the day, and is wrapped in a grey scarf that is the size of a small comforter. "It's a gift from Oprah," he explains, as he starts to take off the fabric—which covers his six-foot-one frame like a sari—"she's *such* a sweetie." Although today's schedule does not include any live performances, Lambert is completely stage-ready, sporting his signature black guyliner, spiked raven-coloured hair, and a face fully coated with a heavy dose of beige concealer. "I've never been *that* guy..." the singer nicknamed "Glambert" says, before untangling the nest of silver necklaces and feathers hanging down his chest. "You know, the one who's always wanted to have a quiet, subtle life."

The past few months for the openly gay singer have been anything but quiet. On Nov. 22, a day before the release of his disc, *For Your Entertainment*, Lambert performed at the American Music Awards, broadcast on ABC. During his number, he proceeded to grind one of his dancer's faces into his pelvis, grab the crotch of another, and passionately kiss his male keyboardist. ABC got over 1,500 complaint calls and subsequently reneged on its offer to have him perform on *Good Morning America*.

Looking back, Lambert is surprisingly upbeat about the fallout. "My performance is something I'm extremely proud of and I wouldn't change a thing. I am glad it facilitated a conversation about what kind of double standards there are out there, since Christina Aguilera, Britney and Madonna have kissed [on air] before without getting

[banned]." Lambert adds, "I do think it was ironic that I was replaced [on *Good Morning America*] with Chris Brown [convicted of assaulting girlfriend Rihanna]."

What Lambert feels should be of more concern to TV networks is how gays are being represented on mainstream television shows. "All you see is the same type of gay stereotype on *Glee*, *Ugly Betty* and *Entourage*. There's a clown element to them all. It's always the sissy guy that's passive and effeminate who gets it," he clarifies. "I've seen a little bit of the polar extreme opposite too—the gay guy who's a total butch dude—but we need to see [gay roles] that are much more human and complex. Showing diversity is a way of fighting discrimination. And it is still out there. If you go on iTunes, there are a ton of beautiful reviews of my music, but there is also a large portion of ignorant people posting things like 'Gross, he's gay.'"

According to Lambert, "closed-mindedness has made rock music become so conservative and filled with [macho] dudes when it should be filled with people like David Bowie," who, he says, "challenged people's perceptions with his work." One musician Lambert feels is building on Bowie's legacy is fellow popster Lady Gaga. "I swear, she is a gay man, and I mean that in the most affectionate way. Nobody else respects gay culture the way she

does because she's lived it, worked in the clubs, and has a close-knit family of guys who look out for her. She knows how to push the envelope in the right way."

Lambert was so impressed with Lady Gaga's first album, *The Fame*, that he ended up recording a track she gave him called *Fever*. "The session was amazing," he recalls. "She walked in wearing a costume—which is really daywear for her—and I loved it because I went totally costume-y that day too. Before cutting the track, we had a little listening party. She played songs off *The Fame Monster*—it hadn't come out yet—and I played my demos. She gave her me two cents on my songs and we had a couple of whiskeys. Then we recorded the song."

Following in Gaga's platformed footsteps, Lambert's next career move will be planning a soon-to-be-announced tour as well as releasing an EP, which will contain remixes of his first two singles plus a brand new track. In terms of staging his next slew of concerts, Lambert says he wants to keep everything "really simple—a bunch of hot dancers, arty video graphics, a lot of costume changes and fire. You know, just the basics."

As for the show that launched him, "I hope my success on *Idol* can be seen as a symbol of ongoing change," he says. "They've had contestants on the show who have either been gay or seemed gay but they didn't get very far, but I don't think that will be the case anymore. If they'd ask me to be a judge, I would definitely say yes." M



### GORILLAZ... HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY

When the mako flies (a giant fish) / Up from the bottom / In your eyes / Then I know the twilight skies / Are not so broken-hearted (from the end of the line) / It's its love of electric / It'll be flowing on the streets / Night after night / Just to get through the week / Sometimes it's hard / Right now / Single cell (juice) / Out of depression / Rise above—From *Stylo*, the first single off their new album, *Plastic Beach*