

TOM CULLEN



WHY THE BEARDY WELSH STAR OF *WEEKEND* IS ONE OF BRITAIN'S MOST PROMISING NEW ACTORS

Words Matt Mueller

Photographer Rhys Frampton Fashion Editor Way Perry

Ask Tom Cullen about the best weekend of his life and you won't get the cliched reply about a best mate's debauched stag do in Amsterdam. You'll get the title of the film that's changing – changed – his life. Cullen is a revelation in Andrew Haigh's stirring romance *Weekend* as Russell: a gentle gay guy whose life of rejection gets a ray of hope in the unlikely shape of a one-night stand. His performance nabbed the 26-year old the Most Promising Newcomer at the British Independent Film Awards, and deservedly so.

"It's overwhelming," smiles Cullen, perched on the edge of a chair in a Hoxton café. "I had other offers at the time but Andrew's script was amazing and a huge challenge because Russell's everything that I'm not. I'm from a rough background... To be vulnerable is not in my vocabulary."

Cullen is straight but didn't find intimate scenes with co-star Chris Newby difficult. The actor, who immerses himself in his roles, declares, "When I would look at Chris on set, I'd be completely in love." It's a far cry from growing up on a tough council estate in Wales, where Cullen's chums lambasted him for his creative interests.

He's just returned from shooting the historical TV series *World Without End* in Budapest, where he also met his new squeeze, a Canadian actress he's plotting to move to New York with. Courtesy of *Weekend*, sizeable doors are opening up for Cullen. But he's prepared to play a waiting game. "I could take a lot of jobs now that would earn me lots of money but I'm not an actor because I want to be famous or earn millions of pounds," he muses. "I'm looking for things where I can stretch myself as far as I can."

WEEKEND is out on DVD and Blu-Ray on March 19.



*Grey wool pinstripe suit and white cotton shirt
by GIEVES & HAWKES, black glasses frames
by CUTLER AND GROSS, grey silk tie
and silk pocket square by TOM FORD at
HARRODS, black umbrella by HACKETT.
Left: Black glasses frames by CUTLER AND
GROSS, black umbrella by HACKETT. Hair
MEGGIE COUSLAND using BUMBLE
AND BUMBLE. Make-up ADAM DE CRUZ
at THE BOOK AGENCY using SHISEIDO
MEN. Photographic Assistance HUW
GURAT and ROKAS DURULIS. Fashion
Assistance ALEX HARLEY and OLIVIA
ANDERTON Make Up Assistance
HOLLEIGH GALLON Production ANDY
PICTON at FIVE4 PRODUCTION
Digital JULIA ESKELL Shot at HOXTON
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