



The Devil Wears Gucci

Carson Kressley takes the stage July 25-August 18 in Ogunquit Playhouse's *Damn Yankees*.

INTERVIEW BY COLIN W. SARGENT

Great you're coming back to Ogunquit to star in *Damn Yankees*. In your case, will it be "The Devil Wears Gucci" or "The Devil Wears Missoni"?

I think for a summer in Maine it would have to be "The Devil Wears L.L. Bean"! Even though I love European designers, I have a great appreciation for classic American sportswear. I love the preppy Americana of New England, so don't be surprised if you see me around town in seersucker shorts, patchwork shirts, and boat shoes. When I come to Maine, I'm living the dream!

Are you a Red Sox or a Yankees fan?

Would you believe I'm not that much of a sports fan? I know, it's hard to believe! I guess I'd have to say I'm more of a Red Sox fan since I made several of them over on an episode of *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*. I even took to the ball field with some of them for a charity game and threw out

the first pitch at Fenway Park. I still have that ball...somewhere!

What do you think of their changing the Washington Senators to the Red Sox to fan the flames of the rivalry?

I think it's great. I play "The Devil" in the show, so I'd better get into character and encourage all flame fanning.

You did such a fantastic job starring in *The Drowsy Chaperone* at Ogunquit Playhouse. Did that start something for you?

I am so grateful for that part. I adore that show and I had an absolutely wonderful time playing "Man in Chair." I just did the best I could to bring him to life in a believable way. The show was so well-written and directed—and the cast was so talented—it made my job easy. I really felt for the character and his love for Broadway, so that part was easy. Even though he could be quite lonely at times, he ultimately finds joy in the

show he loves so much. I tried to tap into that same feeling.

Did you stay at 16 Beach Street last time you were here? Where will you stay this time around?

I love 16 Beach Street and its lovely owners, Dick and Linda Wickert. They were the first friendly locals I met when I first visited Ogunquit, so Beach Street will always feel like home.

What were some of the haunts you visited in Ogunquit two summers ago?

After the busy weeks of rehearsal, days become free and I can really enjoy all that Ogunquit has to offer! I love to go antiquing in Wells, hit L.L. Bean in Freeport (they have a great refreshment stand that serves a killer lobster roll), or just hit the gorgeous beach in town! Of course a star's gotta eat, so I love Barnacle Billy's and Cape Neddick Lobster Pound!

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THE ARTS



From left: Carson Kressley takes pride in his makeover of Kevin Millar and Jason Varitek during the 2005 season of *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*. Kressley also revamped Johnny Damon, Tim Wakefield, and Doug Mirabelli.

In the 1958 movie *Damn Yankees*, Ray Walston played the Devil and Tab Hunter played Joe Hardy. Who's your answer to Tab Hunter this summer?

Oh, that would have to be Zac Efron. What a dream boat!

Cary Grant was originally considered devil material when they were casting the movie. Since Walston, famous devils playing in *Damn Yankees* include Victor Garber, Jerry Lewis, and more recently, Sean Hayes. What kind of devil will you be?

Sassy is the key word. My version of the devil will be sassy and saucy and not necessarily evil. I can't imagine playing evil.

We enjoyed watching you on *Dancing With The Stars*. Did you know Tom Bergeron used to be the host of *Granite State Challenge* (the quiz show for high schoolers in New Hampshire)?

You know, I didn't know that! But I'm not surprised. He's so smart, funny, and talented. And a great kisser. Just kidding. About the kissing part!

If we're always supposed to wear cashmere and never supposed to wear pleated khakis, how would you make over L.L. Bean?

L.L. Bean makes such great things, great American sportswear that is a classic. I'd love to collaborate with them to develop a slightly younger, cooler sub-collection that still reflects the brand's heritage with a more modern silhouette and fit. Kind of like what Thom Browne did with "Black Fleece" for Brooks Brothers. ■