



The Big Fish

...in one helluva big (car)pool, and James Corden has two Emmys and one billion YouTube views to prove it

by HELEN WHITAKER

PHOTOGRAPHS by MATTHIAS VRIENS-McGRATH

STYLED by LUCY WALKER

Grooming: Jason Schneidman at Solo Artists. Fashion Assistant: Ariana Weisner

MAN OF THE YEAR: JAMES CORDEN

“Oh my God, it was impossible. No one would do it!” James Corden, if you can believe it, is talking about Carpool Karaoke, the viral sensation that has racked up one billion YouTube views, has been bought by Apple as a stand-alone series and has marketing people *everywhere* desperate to work out its alchemy in order to replicate it.

But when James arrived in Los Angeles two years ago to begin hosting *The Late Late Show*, he hit a brick wall when he tried to convince gigantic music stars to get in his Range Rover and sing like no one was watching. “Do you want to get in a car with someone you’ve never heard of and sing not just your new song, but all of your old songs too?” That is a difficult call for a publicist to take,” he says. “God bless Mariah Carey!” After watching the Carpool-esque skit James and the late George Michael did for Comic Relief, Mariah agreed, and then the floodgates opened: Adele, Madonna, Elton, Gaga and even Michelle Obama got in on the action.

Of course there’s more to *The Late Late Show* than one franchise – his two Emmys in 2016 are testament to that – and while viewing figures have grown with James at the helm, the way people consume TV these days is not about loyally watching a show every night at 11.30pm, when it competes with sleep. “We feel like we make a show that can be consumed 24 hours a day. We never think of it in terms of a time slot, but, ‘What will people share and want to see today?’”

That means keeping it fresh. As a Tony Award-winning actor (for *One Man, Two Guvnors*), a Bafta-winning comedy writer (for *Gavin & Stacey*) and no stranger to musicals (*Into The Woods*, *One Chance*), he says he has “to use every muscle that he’s ever used before” to perform a new show five nights a week. “Sketches, singing, dancing, hosting, talking about something serious, talking about something not serious at all – you have to have a few clubs in your bag.”

For three nights this month he’s bringing the show to the UK, but it’s only a small sojourn to his homeland. James has three years to go on his contract, so Hollywood is his home for now (though he says the most American thing about him is his two children’s accents: “My son speaks in an English accent to me and my wife, but at school he talks American”). Not bad for a guy who arrived with his producer, Ben Winston, in 2015 and took short-term house leases because they weren’t sure the show would break through.

It’s easy to think that everything he touches turns to gold, but James is the first to admit there have been some missteps – a comedy series that didn’t land, a film that got panned. “You have to be at your best at all times,” he says. “Personally, professionally – you should just be trying your best. The times I haven’t really tried my best, the times I haven’t really cared, that’s the stuff I’m not that proud of. Where I’ve given it everything – that’s the stuff I feel very proud of.”

And is he proud to be our Man of the Year? “Because I used to host the Glamour Awards [James hosted the event in 2009, 2010 and 2011], I always used to think, ‘What’s a guy got to do to win this award?’” Well, the best things in life, James, are worth waiting for.

PREVIOUS WINNERS INCLUDE

James Norton (2016); Calvin Harris (2015); Daniel Radcliffe (2013); Tom Hiddleston (2012)



This page Jacket Marni at Harvey Nichols; trousers Lanvin at Matches Fashion. Opposite page T-shirt Cressida Jamieson



GLAMOUR
WOMEN of the YEAR
next