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**A&E Spotlight**



# MAN OF HIS WORDS

ALAN CUMMING—ACCLAIMED ACTOR, AUTHOR, ENTERTAINER AND ACTIVIST—HAS MORE ON HIS MIND THAN HIS UPCOMING CABARET SHOW IN BOCA RATON

BY KEVIN KAMINSKI

**T**hough it's not easy to catch every word amid the background noise of the train he's riding in New York City, there's no mistaking the man with the rich Scottish accent on the other end of the cell phone line. Two-time Tony Award winner Alan Cumming is on the move, no surprise given the relentless momentum of his diverse and endlessly entertaining career.

It's likely that transportation other than a train will deliver him to Boca Raton later this month for two performances of his acclaimed cabaret show, "Alan Cumming Is Not Acting His Age." Not that Cumming needs to check more show business boxes.

The 58-year-old, who began turning heads on theater stages in Scotland and London during the 1980s, became known to American audiences in films featuring James Bond (*Goldeneye*) and Marvel characters (*X2: X-Men United*). Cumming, who won Best Actor in a Musical in 1998 for his role as master of ceremonies in *Cabaret* (and a second Tony in 2022 as producer of *A Strange Loop*, which won Best Musical), also enjoyed a successful TV run on *The Good Wife*, where he earned three Emmy nominations between 2010 and 2015. Starting April 5, you can catch him along with Cecily Strong and Keegan-Michael Key for a second season of *Schmigadoon!* on Apple TV+.

The *New York Times* best-seller (for his poignant 2014 memoir, *Not My Father's Son*) and front-line advocate for the LGBTQ community spoke with *Lifestyle* about aging, America and more.

## What's been the best part of growing older for you?

Part of it is the realization that you don't have to do what you're told. You don't have to be anyone other than who you want to be—so lean into that. ... The message of the show is to seize the day. Don't be conditioned by all these external things. Live life. ... I hope people come away feeling inspired, like, "Yes, I've still got it."

## In your memoir, you were candid about a childhood that included physical abuse.

### ALAN CUMMING IS NOT ACTING HIS AGE

**When:** Saturday, April 22

**Where:** The Studio at Mizner Park (201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton)

**What:** The award-winning actor brings his cabaret show to South Florida for two performances (6:30 and 9 p.m.). The intimate setting gives Cumming a chance to showcase his "puckish, eclectic spirit and *joie de vivre* [during a] mischievous exploration of that most communal of pastimes: aging."

**Tickets:** Starting at \$99; visit [thestudioatmiznerpark.com](http://thestudioatmiznerpark.com)

## How has peeling that onion helped you professionally and personally?

It's always better to get things out. The more you leave unsaid, the more it leads to speculation—and that can make things much worse. ... One of the things I like about social media is that when you want to say something you have a direct line to people.

I do have to access my past sometimes to do my job as an actor and find the character, but it's important to compartmentalize that so that you

don't stay in this dark place. Ultimately, I think it's quite good to have easy access to the despair—as long as you have easy access to joy as well.

## The Respect for Marriage Act was signed into law (guaranteeing federal rights for marriages involving same-sex couples) in 2022. Also, last year, hundreds of anti-LGBTQ bills were filed by state lawmakers. What does that say to you?

We can never be complacent about our rights. And we're not yet out of the woods. We must continue to be vigilant and, especially, we need to make sure we help the trans community. They're the most vulnerable [group] right now, and they're being used as political collateral in a culture war. We have to stop weaponizing and politicizing things that are different. We're supposedly this land of immigrants. But it seems like anyone here who isn't the same as everyone else is vilified.

## As you travel throughout America, what continues to excite you about this country? And what disappoints you?

I am excited by the continuing struggle for good to conquer ignorance and hate—and how important that is to the majority of people. I'm excited about the fact that the more people have knowledge and are not encouraged to [live in] fear, the more they accept different ideas and ideologies.

The fact that we have to fight against hatred—baseless, bigoted hatred—disappoints me every single day. People in powerful positions have employed and inflamed news and opinions—and that has consequences. It causes a rise in hate crimes. And there's a clear through line that stems [from the rhetoric] of people in power.