

Film Close-Up: Daniel Radcliffe

by Joey_Berlin

Now five films into the wildly popular Harry Potter franchise, star Daniel Radcliffe is about to turn 18 and his magical movies look set to become one of the most profitable series in Hollywood history. The humorous and haunting novels have certainly cast a powerful spell over little Muggles - people who do not have magical abilities - around the world.

DANIEL RADCLIFFE - Daniel Radcliffe returns as Harry Potter in 'Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix.' CNS Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures. In "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix," Harry is facing a tough fifth year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. A powerful new influence at the institution is casting doubt on Harry's frantic claim that Lord Voldemort will soon return, so the boy wizard and his pals realize they must prepare for the showdown on their own.

And for the fast-maturing English actor who plays Harry, life is taking some curious turns. Radcliffe recently made headlines when he tackled a risky role in the London stage revival of "Equus." For the dramatically intense play he had to smoke, simulate sex and appear nude on stage. He intentionally tried to play against audience expectations and succeeded, earning strong critical acclaim for his performance.

Radcliffe has two more Harry Potter adventures left to film, and he will next appear on the big screen in a smaller-scale movie, "December Boys."

Q: What was it like to play Harry as he changes in "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix," becoming a leader and teacher of Dumbledore's Army?

A: Those scenes were great for me. I mean, he starts off as this very reluctant leader-teacher, and by the end he's Henry V. And it was to the point where David Yates, the director, did actually give me notes and said, "Dan, could you rein it in a bit?" So it was great. The only problem with those scenes was that the set we filmed them on had under-floor lighting and that whole place was mirrors, which meant the set seemed to be a degree hotter than the sun.

Q: As you and your young co-stars have grown up with these characters, have you found that they influence you in real life?

A: That's sort of a question that gets asked in different ways and it's one that I think people would always want us to say, "Yes, we couldn't live without them." And while they have been amazing I don't know if they've actually influenced us. Certainly for me, I don't know that Harry has influenced me too much.

Q: The final book in the series will be out in a few weeks. Did author J.K. Rowling give you a little preview?

A: No, none of us got a preview. Only J.K. Rowling's husband has recently found out what happens. I think that we get a copy the night it's released, not before.

Q: There is so much speculation about who dies in the final book. How would you feel if your character

does not make it?

A: A couple of years ago I said that I would like Harry to die because I think that is a completed ending. But the next day it said in the headlines, "Radcliffe Wants Harry Dead!" That was awful, so I'm going to stay away from that now. I do think it would be fitting, in a way, because I think that when you consider the prophecy that's been made about him and Voldemort, I think that one of them has got to go. But I don't know. There's nothing I can really say. I think he might, but that's based on absolutely nothing.

Q: How was your stage experience, doing "Equus?"

A: The stage experience was phenomenal! I think it came at exactly the right time for me and, you know, at that stage it was exactly what I needed to do. And it was great fun. It was fantastic. I met some brilliant people and got to work with Richard Griffiths in a totally different capacity than we do in the Potter films.

Q: Your Harry Potter paychecks have made you one of the wealthiest young people in Britain. What, if anything, have you treated yourself to over the years?

A: Nothing particularly exciting. Like, I'm quite interested in artwork and things like that, but I've never been into cars or anything like that. So I don't think I'm going to splash out on a classic car collection, which I think people really expect me to.

Q: What thought have you given to your career post-Harry Potter? What would you like to be doing next?

A: I suppose it's to just keep acting and hopefully do really interesting and different things. I just want to continue to find things that are difficult for me to do and challenging, so that I don't become complacent. Just carry on, really. And I'd like to write, I suppose, as well. That's a very long way away, but it's another thought. So for now I just want to continue where I'm going.

Q: Would you write fiction?

A: No, no, just poems and things.

Q: What is it like for you and your co-stars, dealing with being so famous?

A: You do have to laugh at it in the end because it's bizarre, it's funny. Obviously there will always be some things that people do that we can't get to do. But we also have loads of opportunities that have been extended to us, and that's amazing. We're all so very fortunate. But it is rather a strange experience.

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