

Created by: Debra C. Argen

## Telly Leung - Interview



[Broadway star Telly Leung](#) is a "**triple threat**" - a theater term for someone who can **act, sing, and dance**. With a host of top-Broadway shows under his belt, including his current role in the hit **Broadway musical-[Aladdin](#)**, as well as television appearances including the role of **Wes the Warbler** on **Glee**, he is someone who continues to prove his mettle. **Telly Leung** takes time from his busy schedule to speak with Luxury Experience.

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**Telly Leung**

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**LE**

A native New Yorker, you grew up in Brooklyn, New York, and like many teenagers, you discovered the joy of acting in high school plays at New York's Stuyvesant High School, a math and sciences school.

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However, unlike most high school students, while still in school, you were able to parlay that into a professional career, beginning with working on The WB-Team 11 doing live and television performances.

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Where did you learn to sing and dance?

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TL

I started taking singing lessons for fun after school. I would save up my money and take dance lessons, or buy play tickets at TKTS (discount tickets in New York City), or buy "rush" tickets. I was lucky to be a New Yorker where Broadway was only a subway ride away.

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LE

You further honed your acting craft at Carnegie Mellon University's School of Drama.

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Your theatre credentials are impressive: *Flower Drum Song*, *Pacific Overtures*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Wicked*, *Rent*, *Godspell*, *Allegiance*, *The Secret Garden*, and *In Transit*, leading to your current role of *Aladdin*.

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For readers who have never acted on stage, would you please describe what the attraction is for actors and what it is like to appear nightly before a live audience?

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TL

There is nothing like it, to connect and to have an experience that will change us; it is a spiritual experience, like religion or school, where people gather together in a room, which only happens once in that space, whether it is in a theatre, in a classroom, or by a sermon. I do 8 shows a week and it feels different every night.

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LE

Growing up, who inspired or motivated you to select a career in acting?

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TL

I grew up in a traditional Chinese home, my parents were immigrants, my mother was a seamstress and my father worked as a manager in a restaurant, so they were not "stage parents."

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I had wonderful teachers in high school - the chorus teacher and the acting teacher who volunteered his time after school to put on the shows; I give credit to those amazing public-school teachers for all the work they do.

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Actor, singer, dancer, and songwriter, with several recorded albums, what is next for Telly Leung?

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I play lots of cabarets and Jazz clubs to connect with audiences through music, and have performed in San Francisco to London and Tokyo. I hope I will be doing more next year.

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**LE**

When not acting on Broadway in the title role of *Aladdin*, or performing in concert, how do you like to spend your free time, what little there is of it?

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**TL**

I married my partner (James Babcock) of 13 years last year, and he's a "9-5" person, and I'm a show person, but we're big fans of the theatre and like to go to concerts when we can, and sometimes we just sit on the couch and relax.

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Telly, thank you for taking time to speak with Luxury Experience. I look forward to seeing you in *Aladdin* on Broadway.

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**For information on Telly Leung and upcoming performances, please visit his website:**

[www.TellyLeung.com](http://www.TellyLeung.com).

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