

“Loose Lips”

IT'S NOT WHERE YOU STARTER



Chris Diamantopoulos and Becki Newton  
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**Chris Diamantopoulos** could have had a satisfying career in musical theater, as those who saw him on Broadway in *Les Miserables* and *The Full Monty* can attest. But five years ago, with the support of then-girlfriend and now-wife **Becki Newton** -- who plays the scheming Amanda on ABC's *Ugly Betty* -- he tried his luck in Hollywood, and now plays the pivotal role of Rodney, the gay best friend of **Debra Messing**'s Molly, on USA's new series *The Starter Wife*.

The show began life last season as a mini-series, and Diamantopoulos admits he almost didn't read that script. "It was shooting in Australia, and I didn't want to be away from Becki. But my wife, who is responsible for every smart decision I've ever made, convinced me to go in and read. And even though I think I did half-heartedly, they offered me the job," he says. "The main reason I agreed to the part, though, and now to the series, was the chance to work with Debra. We became instant friends -- like we'd known each other for 20 years. She is the most professional

actor and has a great guy-like sense of humor."

Diamantopoulos also admits he's very pleased with how Rodney's character has been expanded in the series, which runs for 10 episodes. "He's more than just being Molly's ear or a shoulder to lean on now; they've delved into the reality of his everyday life," he says. "They also gave him a love interest pretty quickly -- he ends up falling for a closeted famous gay (played by **James Black**). Personally, I think playing against type sexually is challenging, but more important, Rodney's sexuality is just one aspect of his personality, just like him being a decorator. The funny thing is I have a really good eye for decorating. I've enjoyed renovating both of our homes."

Now that the series has wrapped, he's looking forward to spending time in New York with Newton -- now that *Ugly Betty* is shooting in the Big Apple. And that means the theater can be a big part of his life again. "I've felt starved for seeing theater in L.A., so I hope to see a lot of shows," he says. "And I would definitely do another musical if the right part came along -- my body clock is still on Broadway time. In fact, I'd love to do a biomusical about one of the great Rat Pack crooners, like Dean Martin. And I am a huge fan of *Spider Man*, so maybe there will be a part for me in there somehow."