

CULTURE

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Doctor Love

With Taye Diggs cast as a sexy M.D. on the *Grey's Anatomy* spin-off, *Private Practice*, we're feeling better already

From *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* to *Brown Sugar* and, most recently, his canceled-too-soon star vehicles, *Kevin Hill* and *Day Break*, Taye Diggs has mastered moving in, out and around the mainstream. He's played an unsympathetic landlord, the sexy island boy toy, even a budding hip-hop mogul. And this fall the Syracuse grad is suiting up—in scrubs, no less—as internist Dr. Sam Bennett on *Private Practice*, a by-product of *Grey's Anatomy*. And best believe, there'll be as much drama in Bennett's personal life as in the doctor's office. "Sam upped and left his wife, Naomi, out of nowhere," Diggs, 36, says of his conflicted character, "and now they run a practice together. They're the kind of people who

believe they can have a successful business relationship despite the fact that they're divorced."

Speaking of his on-screen companion, she is, ironically, portrayed by Tony winner Audra McDonald, with whom he shared billing in the musical *Carousel* (his "first real professional gig," he says). It seems as though his career has come full circle, yet continues to blossom. "When I first moved to New York in 1993, I told one of my coworkers at Pizzeria Uno that within a year I'd either be on Broadway, have a TV show, or be in a movie," Diggs remembers. "I wasn't being cocky, but I was confident, and a month later, I got my first Broadway show and was off to the races." —REGINA R. ROBERTSON

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