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Rapper Ludacris shares some Southern hospitality

The artist spoke candidly with several reporters while promoting his new album, "Chicken & Beer"

By **Steven Neuman**
Freelance Reporter

Perhaps you've seen "VH1's Behind the Music" rap artist specials where, sweating their way to the top, rappers send demo tapes to any producer who might listen.

Yet for Ludacris, breaking into the recording industry came naturally.

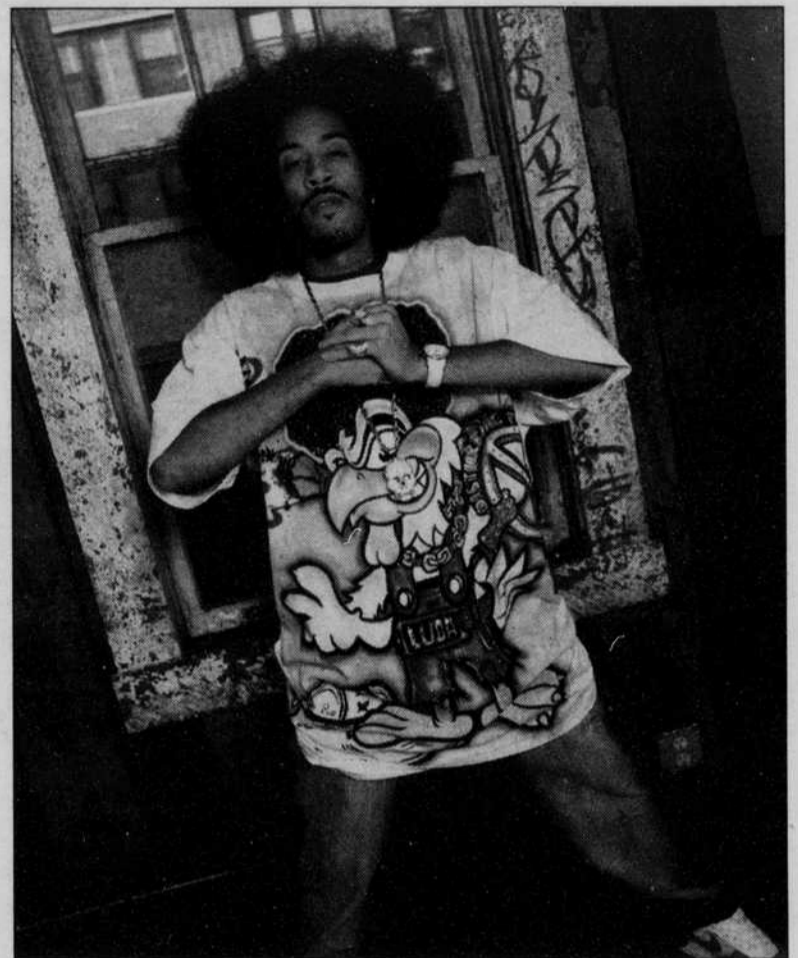
He was born Chris Bridges, a native of Atlanta. This area has recently become known as a lightning rod for the rap world, gathering talent and attracting national attention. Bridges attended college at Georgia State University, where he studied music management and worked at a local radio station in an effort to gain recognition.

Donning the name Ludacris, he recorded his first album, "Incognegro," in May 2000. After catching the eye of record label Def Jam South, "Incognegro" was remixed with the help of top-notch producers, eventually becoming the platinum-selling album "Back For The First Time."

Now unquestionably a star in the rap world, Ludacris spoke with a group of reporters around the country, including the Emerald, about his new album "Chicken & Beer," slated for release Oct. 7.

Q: The Southern style of rapping has been called one of hip-hop's hottest new sounds. How would you say West or East Coast rap is different from that Southern style?

A: It's got a sound of its own, especially when it comes to emotion. It's



Courtesy

Ludacris recorded his first album, "Incognegro," in May 2000.

really, really aggressive; it can motivate me to damn near punch someone. You also hear a lot more instrumentation most of the time.

Emerald: Who would you rate as your top three biggest influences on your sound and style?

A: LL Cool J and Scarface. Let me see... definitely Jay-Z.

Q: What do you love about hip-hop?

A: I love that it changes every day, you have to keep yourself afloat all the

Turn to **LUDACRIS**, page 13

Kesey. Dickinson. Shakespeare.

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PULSE BRIEF

Original play to open University Theatre season

This year's University Theatre season opens at the Robinson Theater

with an original classic: last spring's "This Ship of Fools." The play is based on Sebastian Brant's 15th century text "Narrenschiff," but that text is used only as a departure point for the actors to create their own unique vision.

Since the set was deconstructed after the play closed last spring, it will have a stripped-down design.

"In some ways I like this look better," Director John Schmor said. "We wanted a run-down vaudeville look."

The play will be performed on Oct. 3 and 4. Tickets are \$5 for University students and \$12 for the general public. Special rates are available for University faculty, staff, seniors, youths and groups larger than ten.

— Ryan Nyburg

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