

The Undisputed Champ’s Undisputed Truth

By Kam Williams

Born in Brooklyn on June 30, 1966, Michael Gerard Tyson is an all-time boxing great who, in his prime, struck fear in the heart of any opponent he squared off against. He compiled an impressive record of 50 wins, 5 losses and 1 disqualification for biting off an opponent’s ear over the course of an incomparable career in which he became the first undisputed heavyweight champ to hold the WBA, WBC and IBF title belts simultaneously.

Iron Mike has weathered a host of

woes and controversies outside the ring ranging from allegations of spousal abuse to a rape conviction to the death of his 4 year-old daughter, Exodus, to declaring bankruptcy after frittering away over \$300 million in prizefight purses. Today, he is a very happily-married man, with a couple of children, Milan and Morocco, by his third wife, Kiki.

Mike is currently on a 36-city tour of the country in “Undisputed Truth,” a one-man Broadway show which is part comedy/part confessional and covers all of the above and more. Here, the pugilist-turned-actor talks about his

latest movie, Scary Movie 5, co-starring a rogues gallery of controversial celebrities including Charlie Sheen, Lindsay Lohan, Katt Williams and Snoop Dogg.

Kam Williams: Hi Mike, thanks for the interview.

Mike Tyson: What’s up, Kam?

KW: I really appreciate your taking the time to speak with me.

MT: It’s all good in the ‘hood, my friend.

KW: Ray Hirschman asks: What interested you in Scary Movie 5?

MT: Whew! It’s a franchise that’s going to last ‘til the end of time. I

wanted to be involved with that. I don’t care how silly it comes across. It’s more so for us than for kids. It’s adults acting stupid and silly.

KW: What was it like working with this cast?

MT: Everybody was great. Ashley [Tisdale] was awesome. I got an autographed picture of her for my niece.

KW: Children’s book author Irene Smalls asks: How did you get into acting?

MT: Just from messing around with a friend, Jim Toback, the director of The Pickup Artist. I always used to see him in New York and talk to him when I was younger, like a teenager. Anthony Michael Hall brought me onto the set of one day in about ’86, and Jim and I became acquainted and then good friends, and he started putting me into his movies, first Black and White, and then we did Tyson. He thought I was an interesting character. After that, I did The Hangover and got bitten by the acting bug. I have a lot of friends who’ve won Oscars, and they started telling me I could do it, too.

KW: I remember your doing a great job in Black



Mike Tyson

and White opposite some famous daughter. Who was it, Jennifer Jason Leigh?

MT: That was Bijou Phillips. She was awesome in that film.

KW: And Jim’s documentary, Tyson, was riveting from start to finish.

MT: I’m just very grateful for his friendship. He’s a remarkable dude.

KW: Larry Greenberg says: When we talk about comedy, you hear words that could refer to boxing like “timing” and “punch line.” Do you see any similarities between the two?

MT: I don’t know. People tell me I’m a comedian, but I don’t approach acting from that perspective. I do know that everything in life has to do with your timing and perception. You have to be comfortable with the rhythm that you’re in.

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