

Morris Chestnut: “The Best Man Holiday” Interview

Morris Chestnut was born on New Year’s Day 1969 in Cerritos, Calif., where he was a student-athlete in high school, en route to majoring in finance and drama at California State University. He made his big screen debut opposite Ice Cube in John Singleton’s “Boyz n the Hood,” and subsequently enjoyed his breakout role as the groom-to-be in Malcolm Lee’s “The Best Man.”

The handsome heartthrob has been a much-in-demand leading man ever since, starring in hits like “The Call,” “Think Like a Man,” “Identity Thief,” “The Brothers,” “Not Easily Broken,” “Kick Ass 2,” “Two Can Play That Game,” “Breakin’ All the Rules,” “The Perfect Holiday,” “Half Past Dead,” “Like Mike,” “Ladder 94” and “The Game Plan.” A dedicated family man away from work, Morris and his wife, Pam, live in suburban L.A. with their son, Grant, and daughter, Paige.

Here, he talks about reprising the memorable role of Lance Sullivan in the eagerly-anticipated sequel, “The Best Man Holiday.”

Kam Williams: Hey Morris, thanks for another interview.

Morris Chestnut: No problem, no problem, Kam. Thank YOU, again.

KW: I loved the film. It was like attending a reunion with a whole lot of folks I hadn’t seen in a long-time.

MC: Oh, that’s great!

KW: I’m going to mix my questions for you in with some sent in by fans.

MC: Perfect!

KW: Editor/Legist Patricia Turnier asks: What did it mean to you to reunite with the cast to shoot this sequel?

MC: It was just wonderful coming together again after all these years, especially since we’d had such a great experience before. It gave me a good feeling inside to reunite, almost like family. We’d accomplished so much the first time, and it was pretty much the same with the sequel.

KW: Chalyn Toon asks: Does Lance trust Harper around Mia knowing their past? Does Lance and Mia’s relationship suffer from his being haunted by the images of what happened between his wife and best friend?

MC: That’s interesting. Lance definitely trusts Mia. And I’ve always been that type of person. You really don’t have to worry about your spouse, as long as you trust him or her. If you trust your spouse or whoever you’re in a relationship



CELEBRITY INTERVIEW

by Kam Williams

with, everybody else doesn’t matter.

KW: How did you feel about the arc of your character this go-round?

MC: I was really excited about how all the characters were layered and had depth to them. Malcolm [director Malcolm Lee] wrote a really great script. As for Lance’s arc, I think this is one of the best roles I’ve ever had in a movie.

KW: What message do you think people will take away from the film?

MC: There are so many messages, because the film has a number of storylines. One thing I love about making an ensemble film like this is that you can have ten people come away from it with ten different messages.

KW: Director Rel Dowdell asks: Would you consider your role in “The Best Man” or in “Boyz n the Hood” to be your signature role, since both are iconic?

MC: [Chuckles] Wow! Thank you, Rel, I appreciate that. I’d like to think that they both are. “Boyz n the Hood” definitely put me on the map and really brought me into the game. Hopefully, this one does the same thing, twenty-something years later, because I feel very strongly about it. It’s a great, emotional role in a great movie overall.

KW: Patricia says: You have been in the movie business for decades. What advice do you have for aspiring actors who want to achieve longevity?

MC: I would say focus on your craft. Nowadays, a lot of people come to quote-unquote Hollywood thinking that all they just have to be different or do something outlandish or have a huge personality to become a star. But I think that if you just focus on the craft, you’ll have a better chance at longevity.

KW: The bookworm Troy Johnson question: What was the last book you read?

MC: Woo! That’s a good question. I read so many scripts, that I don’t do that much leisurely reading of books. But the last, good, feature film script I read was “The Best Man Holiday.”

KW: What is your favorite dish to cook?

MC: I don’t really cook, but I like to eat sweets. When I go to a restaurant, I’ll read the dessert menu before I even look at the entrees. I love sweets, especially chocolate. Hot, hot, warm chocolate fudge... caramel... chocolate chip



Morris Chestnut

cookies... all those kinds of desserts. Now I’m getting hungry. [Chuckles]

KW: What is your guiltiest pleasure?

MC: It would definitely be the sweets. I try to keep in shape and I always have to check myself. Whenever I binge eat, sweets are the one temptation.

KW: The Sanaa Lathan question: What excites you?

MC: That’s a great question. What was Sanaa’s answer to that?

KW: It’s been so long ago, I can’t remember. Sorry.

MC: Well, I’m excited by my family, sports and desserts. [Chuckles]

KW: When you look in the mirror, what do you see?

MC: Nothing special... just me. [LOL]

KW: The Uduak Oduok question: Who is your favorite clothes designer?

MC: I love Hugo Boss, Calvin Klein, John Varvatos and others along that line.

KW: The Mike Pittman question: What was your best career decision?

MC: Signing on to do “The Best Man Holiday.”

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SEATTLE 2013

If you have an event you want to share with the community, email it two weeks in advance to *The Skanner* at info@theskanner.com

Saturday November 16

A NEW WAY TO GET HEALTH INSURANCE. Join us for this free event to learn more about Washington's HealthPlanFinder, the new online health plan market place. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. First AME Church, 1522 14th Ave. Seattle

Tuesday November 19

SEATTLE MARINERS STADIUM TOUR. We at the O2 Program are fortunate to get a behind the scenes private tour of the Mariners Stadium. Pick-ups and drop-offs Ballard High School 3 p.m. Northgate Community Center 3:30 p.m. Return to Northgate Community Center/Ballard High School by 7 p.m. Free for all to enjoy. Call for details and sign ups 206-390-1018

Friday November 22

WILD TALES – A ROCK & ROLL LIFE. An evening with Graham Nash: EMP Museum will host an exclusive event with legendary musician Graham Nash, who will discuss his new autobiography, Wild Tales: A Rock & Roll Life. Doors open at 7 p.m. Event begins at 7:30 p.m. Free. This event is a first come, first seated event. All ages welcome. EMP Museum, JBL Theater, 325 5th Ave. N. Seattle, WA

Saturday November 24

2013 NW BLACK COLLECTOR'S HOLIDAY BAZAAR. Items for sale include but are not limited to Black Santas (table top and animated), Black holiday figurines, dolls and much more. Lakewood Seward Park Community Club, 4916 S. Angeline St. 1 – 4 p.m.

TUMWATER HOLIDAY BAZAAR. Holiday is fast approaching so please join us for one-of-a-kind gifts crafted by local artisans as well as some interesting manufactured items. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Pellegrino's Event Center, 5757 Littlerock Rd. SW Tumwater, WA 98512

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