

Michael Ealy: The ‘Think Like a Man Too’ Interview

For the last few years, Michael Ealy has been red-hot, jumping from TV to film and back to TV, seamlessly. He recently starred in the sci-fi television series, “Almost Human,” for which he earned an NAACP Image Award nomination for Outstanding Leading Actor in a Drama Series. Earlier this year, he starred in the remake of *About Last Night*, and prior to that on the TV series “Common Law.” He also completed impactful, multi-episode arcs on CBS’ hit series “The Good Wife,” and on the Showtime series, “Californication,” while concurrently shooting the feature adaptation of the renowned theatre production, *For Colored Girl’s Only, Who Consider Committing Suicide When The*



CELEBRITY INTERVIEW

by Kam Williams

lege, including the Off-Broadway hits *Joe Fearless* and *Whoa Jack*. It would not be long thereafter before Michael nabbed guest-starring television roles on “Law & Order” and “Soul Food.” And he was subsequently cast in the films *Kissing Jessica Stein* and *Bad Company*. While visiting his friends in Los Angeles, Michael heard about auditions for *Barbershop*. After placing a call to his manager and a few rounds of auditions, he

landed the role of “Ricky Nash,” a two-strike offender. In terms of the tabloids, the blue-eyed hunks was named one of People magazines’ “On the Verge” actors in the magazine’s “Sexiest Man Alive” 2002 and 2013 issues. Furthermore, he was named one of E! Entertainment Television’s “Sizzlin’ 16” of 2004 and appeared on the cover of Essence magazine’s “Hollywood Screen Gems” for their April 2004 issue. Michael resides in Los Angeles with his wife Khatira Rafiqzada and their

baby, Elijah.

K a m Williams: Hi Michael, thanks for the time, bro. **Michael Ealy:** What’s up, Kam?

KW: Tim [Director Tim Story] managed to reassemble the whole cast for the sequel. How’d he make that happen? **ME:** It’s a miracle that everybody’s schedule opened up. I think part of the genius of it was that they made the decision early, and said, “Next summer, we’re going to try to knock this out.” So, everyone kinda made sure that they were available. We also had such a good time making the first

ing. And also constant, constant stimulation, whether it’s people getting drunk out of their minds, couples getting married, people going to strip clubs, prostitutes or whatever. It’s Sin City! It’s hard sometimes to stay focused on your job when there’s so much going on around you, as well as people following you around. There were plenty of distractions. So, I wouldn’t say it was as easy as shooting in L.A. Location is a factor. If you have to go somewhere to work, it helps to be focused.

KW: As usual, I have a lot of questions for you from fans. Harriet Pakula-Tewelles says: This isn’t your first sequel. You also did *Barbershop* 1 and 2. What is it about them that calls you back, and will you be doing *Barbershop* 3.

ME: [Chuckles] I think what happened on *Barbershop* also kinda happened on *Think Like a Man*, and the irony is that both pictures were made with the same director, Tim Story. It just doesn’t happen often that the movie you shot for \$12 million ends up making \$90 million. That’s very rare. So, when you catch lightning in a bottle like that, you jump at an opportunity to come back and do a sequel. You’re lucky if one out ten movies you make gets a sequel.

KW: So, will you be doing *Barbershop* 3? **ME:** I don’t even know whether that’s in the works.

KW: I spoke to Ice Cube a few weeks ago, and it looks like a go. It already has a page up at imdb.com, although no director has



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been named.

ME: Really? Well, they haven’t come to me yet. So, I don’t know anything about it.

KW: What about *Think Like a Man* 3? **ME:** I don’t see why not, if we can bring back the exact same producer, cast and director.

KW: Marcia Evans says: I’m a fan of yours, big time. I think the chemistry you have with Taraji [co-star Taraji P. Henson] in *Think Like A Man* is awesome. I appreciate the message your characters’ relationship

sends to the audience that falling in love can be sexy and respectful.

ME: Thank you.

KW: She goes on to say: I’m a history buff and I love the TV series “Finding Your Roots” with Dr. Henry Louis Gates where he explores the lineage and genetics of some prominent people. When I see you onscreen with those blue eyes, I wonder if you have personally researched your genealogy?

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We had such a good time making the first one that everybody jumped at the chance to come back and do a sequel with the same cast and same director.

Rainbow Is Not Enough for Tyler Perry Studios and Lions Gate Films. Prior to that, he was hand-picked by Will Smith to co-star in *Seven Pounds*, and by Spike Lee to join the ensemble of *The Miracle at St. Anna*. Michael’s riveting performance was lauded in this true story of four Buffalo Soldiers who risked their lives to save a young Italian boy while behind enemy lines. A student of history and supporter of education, Michael participated in the History Channel’s documentary series *The People Speak*, based on Howard Zinn’s acclaimed book where one of the historical figures he portrays is “Malcolm X.” He earned a Golden Globe nomination for his lead performance on the Showtime mini-series “*Sleeper Cell*” where he portrayed Darwyn, a Muslim FBI agent sent undercover to infiltrate a terrorist cell in Los Angeles. He was tapped by Oprah to star opposite Halle Berry in the Harpo Films telepic “*Their Eyes Were Watching God*.” The TV special received rave reviews and was viewed by over 26 million people. Michael earned an NAACP Image Award nomination for Outstanding Actor in a Television Movie, Mini-Series or Dramatic Special for his portrayal of “Teacake”.

The Silver Spring, Maryland native appeared in several stage productions after graduating from col-

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