

Fox, Beckford and Ri'Chard: 'The Chocolate City' Interview

Vivica A. Fox, Tyson Beckford and Robert Ri'chard co-star in Chocolate City which is basically a remake of Magic Mike. Director Jean-Claude La Marre explains that he felt an African-American variation on the male stripper theme was in order, given the absence of black faces in the original.

This version of the tale revolves around a cash-strapped college kid (Richard) who hides from his mother (Fox) the fact that he's moonlighting as an exotic dancer at a neighborhood nightclub on ladies' night. The three recently spoke to me via a conference call about the film, and also about the rumors circulating in the tabloids of a steamy set romance between Vivica and Robert.

**Kam Williams:** Hey, thanks for the interview.

**Robert Ri'chard:** Hey Vivica, how are you?

**Vivica Fox:** I'm fine darling. How are you?

**RR:** When are you going to take me out for a glass of champagne, so I can buy you some chocolate?

**VAF:** [Laughs] You're starting way too early, Robert. What, are you in need of a mimosa already? You're too much! Too much!

**Tyson Beckford:** [Joins call] Hey, what's happening everybody?

**VAF:** Hey, Tyson.

**RR:** I heard you're in Vegas.

**TB:** No, I was in Los Angeles a few hours ago. But now I'm in New York. And I'll be



CELEBRITY INTERVIEW

by Kam Williams

back in Vegas at this time tomorrow.

**RR:** I wanna dance tomorrow.

**TB:** You keep saying that, but you've got to rehearse. You can't just show up and get onstage. We'll have to work you out. You're rusty.

**RR:** I want to come to a rehearsal tomorrow.

**TB:** We don't have one scheduled. I'll have to bring you in and rehearse you real quick, if I have time for it.

**KW:** Let me start off the interview with a

I went to see Magic Mike. And I went, 'Wow! How crazy is it that they don't have any African-Americans in this?' I felt that whoever makes this film African-American will win

question from children's book author Irene Smalls. She asks: What interested each of you in Chocolate City?

**TB:** I'll answer first, since I was the first to sign on. What interested me was the script. I loved how the characters showed their emotions. It made me feel for Robert's character [Michael], because I've been through that as a college student trying to make my way through life. And I did the whole topless waiter thing in a male revue before, so I knew I could connect with it. In addition, I found the idea of Jean-Claude [director Jean-Claude La Marre] building an entire cast around me kind of intriguing. I was eager to see what he would come up with. So, that's why I



Chocolate City's Robert Ri'chard, Tyson Beckford and Darrin DeWitt

me walk in front of him. He was the man! I was like, "This is my dude!" So, when I was approached about working with him for a whole movie, I didn't hesitate for a second. I just said, "Count me in."

**KW:** Is there any truth to the rumor that you two are an item since making this movie?

**VAF:** Yes, Robert Ri'chard is the love of my life!

**RR:** The rumor's not big enough.

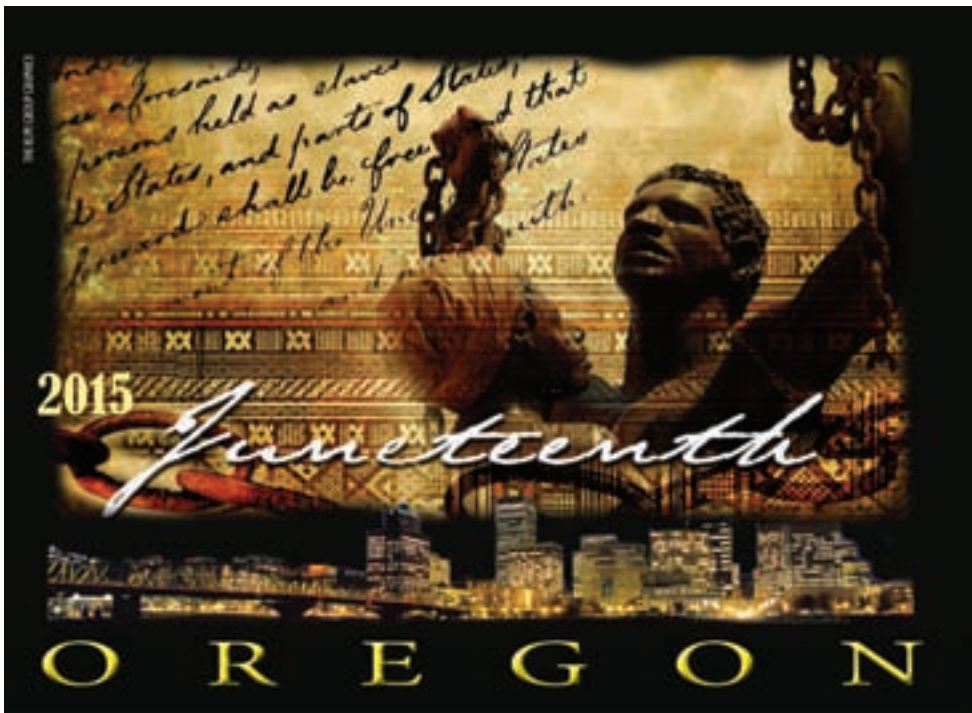
**VAF:** [Laughs] We're having fun, but let me set the record straight. No, it's not true. It was my first time working with him. And our scenes were so intense that everybody was like, "Wow! They have a major connection with each other." But it was literally mutual respect as actors. There's no romance going on.

**RR:** Yet. I wonder how the tabloids are predicting the future.

**VAF:** [Laughs]

**KW:** Editor/Legist Patricia Turnier for Vivica: I am a big fan and have followed your career since the late Eightiess. I probably watched Two Can Play That Game, one of my favorite romantic-comedies, over 40 times. Is there any chance you'll make another sequel of this movie?

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