

Arts & Entertainment

Chestnut

cont'd from pg 7

KW: Did you model your character, John Taylor, specifically on anybody?

MC: No. It wasn't until after a few people who go to the same gym saw the trailer, that I learned about someone who'd been in a similar situation. In preparation, I basically drew on different experiences that would

KW: Is there a dream project you'd like to see greenlit?

MC: Yeah, there's one I'm waiting on. I wanna kinda keep it under wraps for now.

But when I'm ready to announce it, I'll definitely let you know.

KW: Larry Greenberg asks: Do you have a favorite movie monster?

MC: Godzilla, since childhood.

KW: The Pastor Alex Kendrick question:

was a crazy thing to do when I was starting out.

KW: What was your very first acting job?

MC: My first union job was "Boyz n the Hood," but my very first acting gig was in a play at a community college.

KW: The Flex Alexander question: How do you get through the tough times?

MC: Faith. You have to believe in what you're doing, and just keep moving forward. I learned

las question: If you had to choose another profession, what would that be?

MC: Ooh, that's a good question.

Years ago, I wanted to be an athlete. Today, it would be in finance, banking, or something of that nature.

KW: Is there anything you want that you don't have yet?

MC: Yes, that's a long

list that I'm still working on.

KW: Craig Robinson asks: What was your last dream?

MC: I had one last night, but can't remember the details.

KW: Can you come up with a generic question that I can ask other celebrities I interview?

MC: Yeah, was there

any particular moment in their childhood that inspired them to be where they are today?

KW: That's a great one. That'll be my Morris Chestnut question. Thanks again for the time, brother, and best of luck with the film.

MC: My pleasure, Kam.

To see the trailer, visit TheSkanner.com.

“But no one has everything in life, even though it often appears that some do. I tell that to young kids when I speak to them. I tell them, ‘Do the best you can in living your life, and don't glorify anyone else's life’

justify the behavior of this character.

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

MC: First and foremost, I want them to be entertained. But the one thing I did like about Regina's and my character was that we seemingly have it all.

But no one has everything in life, even though it often appears that some do.

I tell that to young kids when I speak to them.

I tell them, “Do the best you can in living your life, and don't glorify anyone else's life.”

When do you feel the most content?

MC: When I'm able to put smiles on people's faces for various reasons.

KW: The Toure question: Who is the person who led you to become the person you are today?

MC: Both of my parents. They instilled morals, values and certain philosophies in me.

KW: What's the craziest thing you've ever done?

MC: Pursuing a career as an actor.

It might seem like a wise choice now, but it

that may years ago.

KW: The Laz Alonso question: How can your fans help you?

MC: They've already done a lot.

They can help by continuing to support me the way they have throughout the years.

KW: Attorney Bernadette Beekman asks: What is your favorite charity?

MC: I don't have one favorite. I work with the Boys and Girls Clubs, Children's Miracle Network and the American Cancer Society.

KW: The Gabby Doug-

FILM REVIEW: 'Kicks' a Bleak-Yet-Hopeful Inner-City Saga

By Kam Williams
For The Skanner
News



'Kicks' stars 14-year-old actor and rapper Jahking Guillory (second from the left)

Brandon (Jahking Guillory) saved up for a pricey pair of Air Jordan, only to suffer the utter humiliation of having them stolen right off his feet at gunpoint by a gang of ghetto predators. Thus arrives a moment of truth for the nerdy 15-year-old who finds himself stuck at an unpleasant station in life where he's not only routinely picked on by his peers but absolutely ignored by the opposite sex to boot.

Should he simply shrug off this latest dis as merely another cold reminder of what life is like in the 'hood for any kid that isn't macho, or is he finally mature enough to exact a measure of revenge on Flaco (Kofi Siriboe), the pompous perpetrator who'd seized the sneakers as a gift for a son (Michael Smith, Jr.)? Believe it or not, that is the sum and substance of the dilemma which fuels the fire of "Kicks," a super-realistic inner-city saga marking the memorable directorial debut of Justin Tipping

This earthy, slice-of-life flick convincingly captures the anomie and sense of desperation which might help explain why so many black youths opt to murder each other over seemingly trivial slights nowadays. While this story unfolds against the barren

backdrop of Oakland's exoskeleton, it could just as easily be taking place in such equally-godforsaken environs as latter-day Chicago, Baltimore, Newark, St. Louis, New Orleans or Detroit.

Before Brandon embarks on his hunt for Flaco, he enlists the assistance of his BFFs Albert (Christopher Wallace, Jr) and Rico (Christopher Meyer). They prove to be game and, for some reason that is never broached, theirs is a lawless world devoid of the option of approaching police or parents to intervene on their behalf.

A tentative tale of woe every bit as bleak as it is hopeful that there's an exit at the other end of a disturbingly dystopic tunnel.

Excellent ★★★★★

Rated R for pervasive profanity, drug and alcohol abuse, sexuality and violence, all involving teens.

To see a trailer for Kicks, visit TheSkanner.com

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