

Ludacris: The “Fate of the Furious” Interview

By **Kam Williams**
For *The Skanner News*

The multi-talented Chris “Ludacris” Bridges has enjoyed a remarkable career. As a recording artist, Bridges has sold more than 15 million albums domestically, thanks to the blockbuster success of such singles as “Stand Up,” “Get Back,” “Southern Hospitality,” “Number One Spot,” “Money Maker” and “My Chick Bad.”

All of these records were accompanied by ingenious videos that demonstrated Luda’s far-reaching imagination and his willingness to stretch the boundaries of what rap videos could look and feel like. Blessed with an unrivaled mix of lyrical acumen, wit and imagery, he has solidified himself as one of music’s premiere entertainers.

Though best known

for his infectious tunes, Ludacris has proven himself equally adept at composing powerful songs with serious subject matter, such as the hit “Runaway Love.” Furthermore, his versatility and artistic complexity enabled him to make a seamless transition to acting.

On screen, he most recently co-starred in *Furious 7*, a follow-up to his stellar work in the *Fast and Furious* franchise’s *2 Fast 2 Furious*, *Fast Five* and *Fast & Furious*. He was a member of the A-list ensemble assembled for the romantic comedies *New Year’s Eve* and *No Strings Attached*.

Luda also delivered critically-acclaimed performances in *Hustle & Flow* and the Academy Award-winning *Best Picture*, *Crash*, as well as on such television series as *Empire* and *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*.



Ludacris as Tej Parker in ‘The Fate of the Furious’

Plus, since stepping back into the studio, he’s been wowing music fans with his 8th studio album, *Ludaversal*.

The consummate businessman, Luda’s latest venture includes the highly-anticipated *Chicken-n-Beer* restaurant coming soon to the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Air-

port. In addition, he is dipping his hands in the tech space by partnering with apps such as *Roadie*, an on-the-way delivery service.

Luda’s philanthropic efforts rival his entertainment accomplishments. He partnered with *Crash* writer/director Paul Haggis and Artists for Peace and Justice to help raise more than \$4 million for Haitian relief efforts. And he’s raised more than \$100,000 for Atlanta flood victims through The Ludacris Foundation, too. Having partnered with Jane

Fonda, Bill Gates, Richard Branson and Nelson Mandela, to name a few, the foundation continues to inspire youth through education.

Here, Luda talks about reprising the role of Tej Parker in “The Fate of the Furious” opposite Vin Diesel, Dwayne Johnson, Michelle Rodriguez, Jason Statham, Charlize Theron and Tyrese.

Kam Williams: Hi Luda, thanks for another interview.

Ludacris: What’s up, Kam?

KW: I really loved this film!

L: You and me both. So, I’m glad that you feel it.

KW: “Furious 7” left me in tears, given the sensitive way they handled Paul Walker’s exit. So, that left me wondering whether they’d be able to get back to the action following such a moving conclusion. But they handled the transition seamlessly and very tastefully. It works perfectly.

L: It does, Kam. And I feel like this is the most

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her sleeping with anybody.

For example, he went crazy and beat up the entire staff at Napoli’s Pizzeria, when he suspected the owner of sleeping with her. Gesuippe Napoli (Ricky Wayne) was so incensed by the pummeling that he’s summoned a hit man from Sicily (Gianni Boromei) to knock off the perpetrator.

Meanwhile, right across the street from Kupcakes we find Marvin’s, an old-fashioned barbershop frequented by a colorful cast of characters. The place is run by Marvin (Vas Blackwood) and his two brothers, Hathi (Corey Mendell Parker) and Anaconda (Nicoye Banks).

Each of the siblings has a distinctive physical trait. Marvin has a huge Afro, Hathi has big ears, and Anaconda was blessed with gargantuan genitalia, hence the nickname. And he’s a sex addict dating Nola’s BFF, Karen (Kamille McCuin). Karen is the neighborhood drug dealer, not to be confused with another hustler who lurks around, pressuring passersby to purchase everything from watches to underwear.


Additional players in this theater of the absurd include Woody (Lucius Baston), an aspiring opera singer who only stutters when he speaks, and a trio of hooded Ku Klux Klansmen threatening to kill Will unless he stops the pontificating in favor of civil rights.

All of the above are afforded their moments to shine in “N.O.L.A. Circus,” a kitchen-sink comedy written and directed by Luc Anest. The foul-mouthed Frenchman is apparently unaware of contemporary social trends, since his irreverent film debut arrives laced with profanity, ethnic slurs, misogyny and assorted other salacious material ostensibly intended to easily offend.

The picture relies on a preposterous plot somewhat redeemed by the fact that the outrageous antics onscreen are often hilarious. So, don’t be surprised if you end up laughing in spite of yourself.

Politically-incorrect, crassploitation fare strictly for the unshockable!

Very Good ★★ 1/2
Unrated




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THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE (PG) Fri-Thur: 12:15, 5:05	LION (PG-13) Fri-Thur: 2:05, 7:20
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HIDDEN FIGURES (PG) Fri-Thur: 11:25, 4:25, 7:05	

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BOTTOM: MONA GOLABEK IN THE PIANIST OF WILLESDEN LANE. PHOTO BY HELLOPIX.COM.