

# 50 Cent raps about music, movies, fatherhood

By Kam Williams  
Sentinel-Voice

Born Curtis James Jackson, III in South Jamaica, Queens, N.Y., on July 6, 1975, 50 Cent has eclipsed his mentor Eminem as the pre-eminent gangsta' rapper of the day. Like Marshall Mathers did with 8 Mile, Fitty decided to make his feature film debut by keeping it real with a semi-autobiographical docu-drama.

"Get Rich or Die Tryin'," which was directed by Jim Sheridan and co-stars Terrence Howard and Joy Bryant, chronicles the efforts of an orphan-turned-drug dealer to extricate himself from a dead-end life on the streets to pursue a hip-hop career.

KW: How did you find it making your first movie?

50: I kinda' prepared myself prior to comin' there. I made sure I knew all the dialogue and everything. And I'm always on time with the things I'm supposed to do.

KW: Did you find it a challenging experience?

50: Sometimes it was freezing out there in Toronto, Canada. I felt that we coulda picked a place better than this.

KW: How about emotion-

ally, given that it's your life story?

50: Actually, shooting the scenes, for me, wasn't that difficult, because it actually happened different from what I experienced. I was just concentrating on making sure my physical performance as the shots were going off were accurate. And now when I look back at it, I think I did a great job.

KW: Isn't this supposed to be autobiographical?

50: It is loosely based on my life story and is about 75 percent factual.

KW: What about the death of your mother?

50: The scene with mother actually wasn't done accurately. My mother's situation was, someone put something in her drink, and then turned on the gas to cut off her oxygen.

KW: What were the hardest scenes to shoot?

50: The difficult points was rapping like I didn't know how to rap, and being believable at that point. When we got to those scenes, I just kinda' made up stuff. Then I had to remember it, because we did it over and over a few times.

KW: Why is it that whenever your name comes up,

the first thing that people seem to talk about is the fact that you were shot nine times?

50: That's because they've heard the story over and over through different media outlets and different publications. They've never heard me say, "You know what? I been shot." I don't ever bring it up.

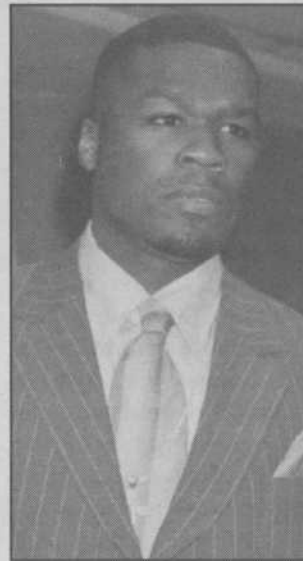
KW: Then why does the media continue to focus on that aspect of your past?

50: I think it's something that they find some significance in, and ask me questions about it. I think it's because a lot of the people interviewing me haven't been subjected to those things. They're not actually from an environment where those things happen. And they're intrigued by it. Since I've been touring, I've been places where there's next to zero gun violence, where the police officers don't even carry guns. I said, "What?"

KW: Do you consider your scars a sort of red badge of courage that gives you street credibility?

50: Me? I think it's unfortunate to have to experience something like that. Or even be close to it.

KW: How do you respond



Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson has created a business around his gruff hip-hop persona.

to those people who complain about what they see as harmful messages being delivered by gangsta' rap?

50: There are more standards placed on music as an art form than are placed on any other forms of entertainment. We haven't seen a gun or a weapon on the cover of a CD that was distributed by a major record company since probably 1987, KRS-One's "Criminally Minded."

KW: I did not know that. In some cities, like Philly, local activists have successfully lobbied to have the bill-

board for this movie taken down, because it shows you holding a gun in one hand, a microphone in the other.

50: We probably see weapons used to market other film projects, more than we see people's faces. Nobody has a problem with that. But as soon as they see me with a gun on a billboard, they go, "Oh my God, this is promoting violence. This is dangerous."

KW: Why do you think that happens?

50: They believe the possibilities of me doing something wrong are higher, because they've had references to rappers being in shootouts, or being shot in situations, but they don't realize that these people still live in the environment where this goes on. So, when they go home to it, they are subjected to the same things that are there, where the price of life is cheap.

KW: What do you think of Samuel L. Jackson decision not to compromise his integrity by making movies with gangsta' rappers?

50: That was actually good, if he was looking for press. Samuel Jackson is the special case of a person who forgets that he is in the entertainment business. Some people go to college for acting and everything, but because no one knows them, there's not a better business deal than it is to make a film with 50 Cent. I sold 11 million records for my first album. And for everyone who bought it, there was someone who stole it. So, you got to say I'm generating the interest of maybe 22 million people.

KW: Would you make a

movie with Sam if he changed his mind?

50: I'm not upset with him, but I don't see where he would actually fit into my film, outside of playing my grandfather. His last two films ["Star Wars" and "The Man"] actually sucked. He should have brought some of that integrity to the last two that he did.

KW: Rappers always seem to be proud of keeping it real. Would you say that money has changed you at all?

50: Anyone who tells you that money don't change you, just didn't make enough.

KW: What's your priority in life now?

50: When my son [25 Cent] came into my life, my priorities changed, because I wanted to have the relationship with him, that I didn't have with my father. His life is different, based on I've been able to provide a different environment for him to grow up in. He's still been altered by some of the scenarios and situations that I've been through.

KW: Like what?

50: He actually was in the house when I got shot.

KW: Did he see you wounded and bloody? That must have been traumatic.

50: No, he heard the shots go off, but he never saw me. He just seen me in the hospital after.

KW: Do you spoil him?

50: I can give him more than I received as a kid and not overdo it. I try not to over spoil him. He can't have any and everything he wants. He doesn't ask for much. It doesn't take much to really make him happy. That's it.

KW: Thanks for the time.

## R. Kelly continues 'Trapped in the closet' videos

NEW YORK (AP) - By the time R. Kelly is done with his "Trapped in the Closet" saga, it may have more chapters than "Moby Dick."

The videos for parts one through 12 of the dramatic, over-the-top cheating story were released on DVD this week. Kelly says he actually has 22 chapters completed — "and (it's) still going." And he plans to release them all on DVD.

"Other characters are being introduced into the whole situation, and it's just this big whirlwind, a circle of just drama, of things that really do happen on the earth," he told The Associated Press.

"It's gonna flip people out because some people are going to see themselves in these chapters, and that's what keeps the excitement going — I think that's what keeps people going.

"I've got to get the next one!"

It's not Kelly's only project: He's working on Michael Jackson's all-star charity record to aid victims of Hurricane Katrina, which he called "unbelievable." He said his own hurricane relief album will be released in the next few months.

And Kelly also has recorded a song for the "Hurricane Relief: Come Together

Now" project, a double-CD featuring Faith Hill, Norah Jones, B.B. King, Elton John and dozens of others, due to be released Nov. 22.

Kelly said his contribution, "Let Your Light Shine," is his attempt to bring attention to "those that are struggling all over the world, from Africa, to Asia, to Egypt to everywhere ... it's not about just New Orleans."

But he said it stresses overcoming personal woes — a subject the singer can certainly identify with.

Kelly faces trial on three-year-old charges of child pornography stemming from allegations he videotaped

sexual acts with a teenage girl.

The singer has denied the allegations, and no trial date has been set.

"I'm going through my own struggle, my own hurricane in a way, we all do, and you're either gonna fold or you're going to stand, and I believe in standing," Kelly said.

"I believe in overcoming, and if I can do it, I wanna be that light so people can see me and feel they can be inspired and say, you know, R. Kelly can get through this, I can get through this, so we can actually go through this together."

## Awards

(Continued from Page 6)

Rwandan genocide in which nearly 1 million people were killed.

Rusesabagina, who was portrayed by Academy Award-nominated Don Cheadle in "Hotel Rwanda," was given a standing ovation Thursday when he told the crowd his name means "the one who disperses his enemies."

Actress Ruby Dee and her late husband Ossie Davis were honored with the new Lifetime Achievement Award.



PAUL RUSESABAGINA

Dee and Davis risked their careers resisting McCarthyism in the 1950s and were close friends of King, whom they served with as masters of ceremonies for the historic 1963 March on Washington.

The awards announced earlier this year were to be formally presented at an evening dinner.

The event is the largest fund raiser for the National Civil Rights Museum, which is housed in the former Lorraine Motel where King was assassinated in 1968.



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