

A funny day with Jamie Foxx

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Special to The Michigan Citizen

As I walked up to the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Dearborn, Michigan I passed by an eye-catching Hummer, and I smile to myself. I know that I've stepped into a different world. The climate has definitely changed. I can actually smell the old money and see the bling bling of the new money.

The moment has arrived; I'm going to meet Jamie Foxx. I'm walking down the beautifully decorated hallway to get to where he is. The door opens and I see him, sitting at a large conference table. I notice he's casually dressed in a black shirt and black pants. I walk to him with my hand extended and say to him: "Hello Mr. Foxx. It's a pleasure to meet you." He looks up at me and frowns. "Is something wrong?" I find myself saying as I turn to his assistant.

Jamie Foxx gets up out of the chair and says, "Yeah, handshakes are for dudes! Can't a Sista show me some love?" I'm like stunned and he knows it. A few seconds later I hear him cracking up laughing, as I watch the amusement on the assistant's face, as he slowly closes the door. I turn around smiling as I give in and walk right into his open arms. "Yeah, I guess you can," I reply.

"So Baby Girl, what's your name and what do you want to ask me? Sit down and let's get to it." This is where my interview with Jamie Foxx begins.

MC: What inspired you to take the part of Ray Charles?

JF: When you look at this movie it has it all. I mean it's a great story line, with major drama and dynamic music. It was just a great bio picture for me to do. It was so realistic that it actually got

into his life.

MC: How did you prepare yourself for this role?

JF: I worked out with a trainer. My normal weight is 195 pounds and Ray was about 155 pounds. I had to work out hard and long. I also wore prosthetics over my eyes under the sunglasses for like up to 12 to 14 hours a day. It was kind of hard to adapt to the darkness at first then I got the hang of it.

MC: How was it when you met Ray Charles?

JF: I ain't gonna lie, I was tongue-tied at first. I mean we talking about "Hit the Road Jack" Ray Charles. But he was really cool about it and we even got to kick it and play the piano side by side.

MC: How was the real man vs. the character that you played?

JF: Ray was a deep cat. Business was always about business. And he was really like that about the ladies. So, I would say that Ray was just like I played him. He approved of the script and was down for what we were doing with his life's story.

MC: How was it possible that Ray was able to gain the perfect cast? Every actor/actress appeared to be morphed into their role.

JF: The cast for this movie was awesome. We got a chance to pick and choose whom we wanted to act in this movie. We went with the essence that was there between

the actor and their character. We were able to achieve this only because this was an independent film and it only cost around \$35 million dollars to make.

MC: Ray Charles had a tough, smart mother who forced him to survive in a cruel world.

Did you have someone like that who inspired you to be the outstanding actor that you are?

JF: Yes, Ray's mother gave him tough love. Mine came from, and still

keeps coming from, my 95-year-old grandmother, Estelle Talley. She was on me. Right now she lives in my house and I've still got to answer to her!

MC: Are you aware that your performances in Ray and Collateral were worthy of some major awards that should have your name all over them?

JF: I do know that I gave my best and my all to each of these projects. I'm pleased with the work that I did, especially on Ray, because it is a beautiful testimony to the life of

Ray Charles.

MC: What's next for Jamie Foxx?

JF: I'm working on my second album. The first one was fun and I'm looking forward to havin' a good time on this one.

We take our picture together and say goodbye. As I leave out of the Ritz Carlton I can hear Jamie Foxx singing with one of the people in his entourage. Yeah, when his album comes out, I'm so there!



Jamie Foxx as Ray Charles, in the upcoming movie about the legendary musician's life.