

TWENTY4SEVEN

ENTERTAINMENT EVERYWHERE MAGAZINE

ISSUE #79
2026



KING MOORE

+ *Jennifer Sears. Six Figga Trigga.*

Boss Lady DeneQuia. T-Mo Goodie. Chef Franco Lania.

Daley. #chennedycarter.

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Visual Communications:
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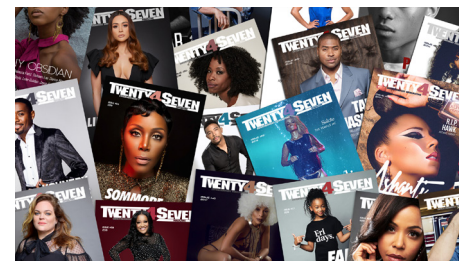
Photography:
Lil Fella
T4S Staff

Marketing/Sales:
Jus Mi Luck Promotions & Marketing

Contributing Writers:
Tia Culver
Ra-Fael Blanco
T4S Staff

Contributing Photography:
Howard Ross
Karetova
AZU Studio & Photography
M.Francke Photography
Marie Thomas
David Verdini
Milani Miori

Contact:
Website: twenty4sevenmagazine.com
Email: twenty4sevenmagazine@gmail.com
Facebook: Twenty4Seven Magazine
Instagram: @twenty4sevenmagazine
TikTok: @twenty4sevenmag
X (formerly Twitter): @twenty4sevenmag
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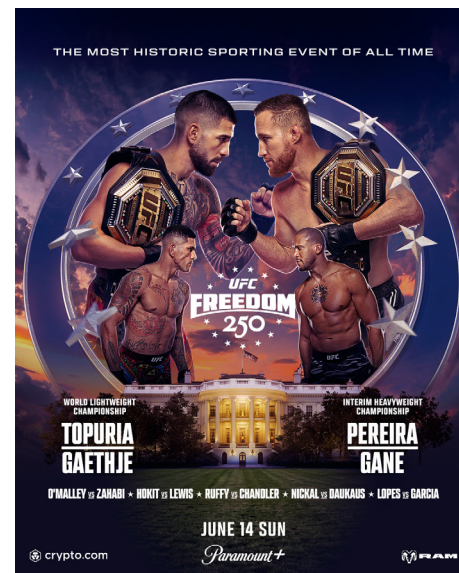
Hello World,

Merriam-Webster defines fate as the will or principle or determining cause by which things in general are believed to come to be as they are or events to happen as they do. Not everyone believes in fate, destiny, or outcomes deemed to be inevitable but I (for the most part) have always carried the idea that things happen the way they are supposed to....to a degree.

I also firmly believe that faith without works is dead because we have to be active in pursuit of some of the things we'd like to happen within our lives, even though God has the final say.

I say all that to say my life thus far has absolutely gone in a way that seems like it has been prewritten and one of the most important aspects of it has been that I've recognized things about myself early on and ran with them, ultimately believing I was on the correct path to get where I wanted to be. I can truly say things are working themselves out.

Tyrone Davis



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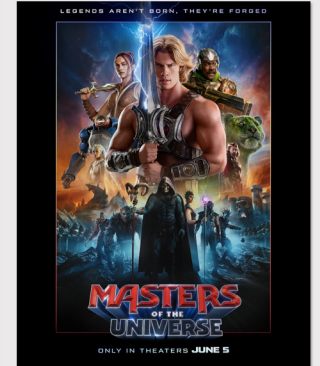
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Six Figga Triggs: Memphis Hustler Turned Motivational Voice for a New Generation

Emerging from the heart of South Memphis, Six Figga Triggs is more than a rapper—he's a symbol of resilience, ambition, and transformation. As an artist, influencer, entrepreneur, and founder of the growing entertainment brand New Money Daily, Six Figga Triggs is building a movement rooted in motivation, hustle culture, and real-life survival stories that resonate far beyond music.

Born and raised in Memphis, Tennessee, Six Figga Triggs understands struggle firsthand. Raised by his grandmother and father alongside twelve other relatives inside a two-bedroom apartment in South Memphis, his upbringing was filled with challenges that could have easily broken his spirit. Instead, those experiences became the fuel behind his music, his grind, and his unwavering determination to succeed.

Despite the hardships, Six Figga Triggs reflects on those moments with gratitude and pride. The environment that shaped him also gave him perspective, discipline, and the hunger to create a different future—not just for himself, but for others coming from similar circumstances. His music offers listeners a first-person perspective of someone who beat the odds—someone born into struggle with little more than hope, determination, and belief. That authenticity has become the foundation of his growing fanbase, which spans diverse audiences aged 25–45 who connect deeply with his motivational messaging and lifestyle-driven content.

At the center of his brand is New Money Daily, the independent entertainment label and movement he founded in the early 2020s. Unlike traditional labels focused solely on music releases, New Money Daily operates as a family-oriented entertainment platform built on positivity, financial elevation, and ownership. Six Figga Triggs has consistently emphasized that the movement promotes peace, growth, and getting money—not violence.

Outside of music, Six Figga Triggs has built a powerful digital presence through daily content creation across Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, and YouTube Shorts. What began accidentally—friends uploading videos of his everyday lifestyle and personality—quickly evolved into viral momentum. His inspirational and comedic content now attracts new supporters daily, with many

followers looking to him for motivation and financial advice.

His credibility continues to rise steadily within Southern hip-hop culture. His first major interview with Wikid Films surpassed 2 million views on Instagram, introducing his story to a much wider audience. He has also worked closely with Young Dolph's label, Paper Route Empire, and has performed alongside artists including Lil Boosie and Big Boogie.



Still, Six Figga Triggs considers his greatest accomplishment simple: making it out of the hood while remaining true to himself and his values.

Though there was a moment where he nearly walked away from music entirely because "the rap ain't paying," that frustration ultimately became inspiration for his latest project, T.R.A.P. (The Rap Ain't Paying)—a raw reflection of perseverance, sacrifice, and belief during difficult seasons. His earlier releases, including his debut album New Money Daily and the follow-up project 6 Figga, continue to build momentum while expanding the New Money Daily movement.

Beyond entertainment, Six Figga Triggs remains passionate about mentoring and uplifting others—especially youth. Whether through music, business, or social media, his purpose is clear: to motivate through proof. His message to listeners is simple but powerful—get up, seize the day, and never allow your circumstances to define your future.

With new music on the horizon, an expanding audience, and a growing independent empire, Six Figga Triggs is proving that success can come from even the most unlikely beginnings. And if his journey is any indication, New Money Daily is only getting started.

Website: SixFiggaTriggs.com
Instagram: [@6FiggaTriggs](https://www.instagram.com/6FiggaTriggs)
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Submission courtesy of Tia Culver for Tia Culver PR.

MAKIN'
NOISE

BOSS LADY
DENEQUIA



PHOTOS: AZU STUDIO & PHOTOGRAPHY

DeneQuia Towns-Able, professionally known as Boss Lady DeneQuia, is a Grammy-nominated entrepreneur, 2x charting independent artist, entertainment executive, autism advocate, and multi-award-winning creative making a powerful impact in music, media, and business. Recognized for her relentless drive, authenticity, and commitment to uplifting others, DeneQuia has become a respected force within Atlanta's entertainment and entrepreneurial communities.

A three-time consecutive Yo ATL Raps Award winner, DeneQuia is the founder and CEO of Boss Lady 365 Conglomerate, LLC, an expanding entertainment and media company focused on artist development, management, branding, and creative production. She is also the owner of JJ's Toys & More, LLC, a successful family-owned party rental company serving families throughout metro Atlanta and beyond.

Beyond her business accomplishments, DeneQuia is widely admired for her advocacy and community leadership. As a proud autism mom and outspoken advocate for special needs families, she uses her platform to raise awareness, inspire inclusion, and support underserved communities. In recognition of her contributions to entertainment, entrepreneurship, and public service, she was honored during the 2026 Women of Arrington LeadHERship Brunch, hosted by Marvin Arrington Jr.

As a manager and booking agent, DeneQuia has successfully developed and represented rising talent including Go Food Queen,

Laid3, and Kuhlthi, helping creatives build visibility and navigate the entertainment industry with confidence and strategy. Her growing entertainment brand continues to expand across music, comedy, digital media, and live events.

Known for seamlessly blending business, creativity, and community impact, Boss Lady DeneQuia continues to build a legacy rooted in empowerment, resilience, and purpose—proving that success is most meaningful when it creates opportunities for others along the way.

Social media:

Instagram: @denequia

TikTok: @denequia

YouTube: @denequia

Submission courtesy of Tia Culver for Tia Culver PR.

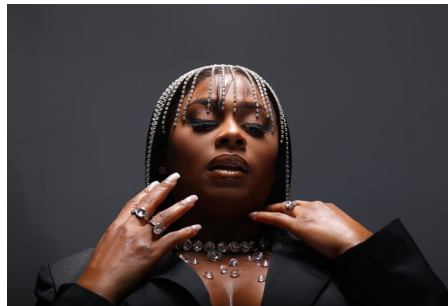


PHOTO BY KARETOVA

T-MO GOODIE OF GOODIE MOB

FOUNDING MEMBER OF LEGENDARY HIP-HOP GROUP GOODIE MOB, T-MO GOODIE RELEASES "WHERE YA AT"

A founding member of the legendary Atlanta Hip-Hop group Goodie Mob, T-Mo Goodie is a pioneer of southern rap whose influence helped shape the rise of Atlanta as a global music powerhouse. Emerging in the early 1990s alongside fellow members Khujo, Big Gipp, and CeeLo Green, he played a vital role in defining the group's signature blend of soulful production, street narratives, and socially conscious lyricism-contributing to classic, platinum-selling projects under LaFace Records.

With over three decades in the industry, T-Mo has remained a consistent force in Hip-Hop, contributing to Goodie Mob's acclaimed catalog-including "Soul Food", "Still Standing", "World Party" and "Survival Kit"-while continuing to tour and represent the culture worldwide. Known for his grounded delivery and authentic storytelling, his work reflects a deep commitment to community, legacy, and truth in music.

Expanding his solo artistry, T-Mo Goodie recently released his latest project, "Where Ya At", now available on major streaming platforms. The album's lead single, "Where Ya At", is accompanied by an official music video, marking a new chapter in his evolution while staying rooted in the sound and message that made him a cornerstone of Atlanta Hip-Hop.

With a legacy spanning 30+ years, T-Mo Goodie continues to bridge generations-delivering music that informs, uplifts, and keeps the spirit of southern hip-hop alive.

Booking: Lakiesha Orange
loorangebeam@gmail.com

Website: www.t-mogoodie.com
Instagram: @2thefullest
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KING MOORE

LOOK AT ME NOW!

Words + Interview By Tyrone Davis

King Moore is an entertainer and recording artist who has accomplished quite a bit in his career thus far. The 10-year-old has released several records, a mixtape, has appeared on shows like, "America's Got Talent", a film, and is also involved in meaningful philanthropic work, all while remaining a kid and participating in regular activities children enjoy.

He is very talented, well spoken, and is in tune with everything he has going on, which can be credited to his parents, who are actively involved in helping him become a well-rounded individual.

During our discussion, King and I spoke about how he got started in entertainment and the importance of keeping one's word, overcoming jitters during season 20 of "America's Got Talent", his single "Ayesha" and Another Bad Creation, his "Kicks 2 Grow" foundation, and more. The future is looking bright for King.

Tell me a little about yourself. What grade are you in and how is school going for you?

I am in fourth grade right now and I am homeschooled. I love homeschool because I can be a kid. I can go to the trampoline park at whatever time after I have finished my work. I can also go to parkour class, go ride my skateboard, ride my bike, or go to the pool. It's super fun. I can even go to Universal Studios! We are in Los Angeles.

Break down how you got started in the business.

So, let me take you way back. When I was three years old, my mom and dad bought me a smart TV and a tablet. My favorite app was YouTube, of course. I loved to watch music videos from people like Michael Jackson, Chris Brown, Drake, Bruno Mars, Justin Bieber, and Soulja Boy. I wanted to be just like them, but all of them combined. Then, I went to my dad and asked him if I could be a recording artist. He laughed so hard and said no at first, but he told me to wait two years and come back when I was five with that same energy.

So, on my fifth birthday, he asked me what I wanted to do for my birthday and I was like, "You know! You said you was going to help me!" He was like, "WHAT?!" I said, "You said you were going to help me be a recording artist, actor, and dancer." He forgot. He told me to wait two years so I could forget. But, he really didn't forget because my dad has great memory but he act like he never said that so he wasn't keeping his word. Then, I used his words against

him because he had been going on and on and teaching me how a man has to keep his word. So, when you say you're going to do something, you have to do it! Look at me now!

Awesome, man. How did that process go in regard to making music with your father helping you out? You are involved in quite a few different endeavors.

I take vocal, piano, and acting lessons and I take parkour lessons for stunts. I have this whole whiteboard of things that have to check off. It says media, media questions, dance class, acting, vocal lessons, writing, manifestation, and prayer, etc. Like everything.

Hmm. That is a lot of work! I know you are young and you have a lot of energy but that is still quite a bit to take on. How are you going about balancing everything?

Well, being homeschooled definitely helps because since I get my work done quickly, I can do other things like opening Pokemon cards. I love Pokemon. I can go play football, or ride my bike, or go to the trampoline. I'm still a kid so that is how I am balancing it all out. I am doing what I love and also having fun doing it.

Absolutely! Tell me a little bit about "America's Got Talent" and your experience working on that show.

As you know, everybody says it is the biggest stage in America, so of course I had the jitters before I went on but when I saw the people saying, "You got this!" and all of the positivity and good energy from everyone, the jitters just flew out of me. When I see my parents being very proud of me and I see that they are happy, I get even more crunk because I'm proud of myself too.

Speaking of your parents and family being your support system, what are some of the things they tell you to keep you encouraged?

They tell me to always follow my dreams and to stay positive. We wrote this song called, "Brand New" and it is about never listening to the naysayers and to just keep going straight and never let people get under your skin.

Got you. One of your songs that caught my attention in particular is "Ayesha", which samples "Ilesha" by Another Bad Creation. When I was a kid, ABC's version was a big hit. How did that song come about?

All I see is fighting and arguing so I am trying to teach the boys and men to treat a girl or woman nicely and to compliment them. I love ABC's song "Ilesha"! (Sings) "Ileshaaaaaa, you are the girl that I never had...." I love that part.



OK, let's talk a little bit about your "Brand New World Global Campaign".

So, my foundation is called "Kicks 2 Grow" and I have created this foundation because I love shoes, I love how shoes give you confidence, and I want other kids around the world to have confidence too. My parents always taught me to give back and the more you give, the more blessings you receive. Then, I started this global initiative called the "Brand New World Global Campaign", named after my song, "Brand New". It all got started when I was invited to this international unity project in Moscow, Russia. There were 16 young and talented artists from all around the world and they loved my song so much, they were singing it everywhere!

They were singing it at breakfast time, lunch time, dinner time, on our tour around the city of Moscow, at our vocal lessons, like everywhere! Then, I asked them if I could remake the song in their native language and they said, "Yes". So now, I have ten different versions of my song with these young and talented artists from all around the world. My goal is to raise enough money, travel to these countries, and meet up with these artists to discuss what organizations and charities they think is important in their countries that we should donate to.

Great. As an actor, you have a film under your belt so far. What was it like working on the film, "Cora Bora" as Langdon?

Ooooooh! That movie was fun because we were on this airplane, like a fake airplane. I was like the life of the party. I was telling jokes and I had my own chair with "King" on it. It was very cool, like super cool! My favorite part about being on set is being in front of the camera and also being behind the camera because I also would like to executive produce, direct, and record my own movies. That is one of my goals too.

What have you learned so far in reference to being on both sides of the camera?

Hmmm. Let me think about that. Let's say, like all the different angles and all the lighting. They have this little blanket that gives a shadow on your face and you can do the highlighting on your camera, like 4K or like 6K, like all this crazy stuff, but it's very fun to learn new things.

Right. Tell me a little bit about "N9ne The Collection".

Oooh, so yeah. My album, "N9ne The Collection" is about when I turned nine. It is a mixtape, you know? I had never done a mixtape before, so I wanted to put one out. I wanted to remake a lot of the

songs from all of the greats, you know? You know how back in the days where these people had mixtapes and CDs? I just wanted to bring that back.

And you have turned that into a clothing line as well?

Oh, yes sir! I have merch on that and I have my own book about it that you guys can go to my site and purchase. It is a whole book that you can read and see these new words.

Okay. So, following your dreams, you have accomplished quite a bit so far at the age of ten. What do you want to do next?

I want to have my own TV show, tour around the world and sell out stadiums, star in many movies, and I want to perform the national anthem at all major sports games in one year. Also, I want to executive produce and direct my own movies.

What type of show would you like to have? What would you like it to center around?

I would say comedy and serious. I would like it to be in a school, you know, like "Bel-Air".

Whether it be music, movies, or being on stage, what has been the most the favorite moment to date?

Probably when I got invited to the White House to speak on gun violence prevention under the Biden and Kamala Harris administration, because in like 2024, there were a lot of school shootings. I made a song called "Safe at School" just to tell adults to lock up their guns so kids can't reach or steal it from them. Kids just want to get an education and do what they want to do without having to worry about someone shooting up their school.

Awesome, man. Lastly, tell me something about yourself that most people don't know.

I'm a great stand-up comedy dude. I love comedy, you know?! I love talking about real life stories. That is a secret gift that I have. Stand-up comedy.

To keep up with King Moore, visit him on Instagram and TikTok @kingmoore__ or online at www.kingmooreworld.com. To donate to his "Kicks 2 Grow" foundation, visit www.kicks2grow.com and click the donation link to help and support the Brand New World Global Campaign.



#CHENNEDYCARTER

@brandilwells: A-List celebrities are fallen angels, even the ones you like and sympathize with.

@70133x: It's too bad all the crash outs we have in America are on the wrong side

@weltszsn: I didn't know an adobe subscription was like signing a 360 deal with birdman

@thinkpiecetribe: He knew you were fat. Get naked!

@ThrillaRilla369: Gunpowder used to be for entertainment, then it was used to kill. Drones used to be for entertainment, then they were used to kill. AI is used for entertainment.

@jmichelle555: Each time Kendrick Lamar drops, it's a completely different version of him creatively. Few artists evolve like that.

@RockkStarrrrr: Dekalb farmers market be thicker than the club on a Friday night honey

@_ayandamay: Maybe Lupita is a really good choice for Helen of Troy. All I've seen is men fighting about her...

@Belorris: MAGA hates black people & immigrants, more than p*dophiles let that sink in.

@slady_valor_07: HAVING A PAID OFF VEHICLE MAKES YOU NEVER WANT TO GET A CAR LOAN AGAIN.

@lssybeatz: AI is so popular because it gives uncreative people the illusion that they are creative. It lets them skip right to the part where they get validation. It's not only parasitic, but extremely narcissistic.

@southernuga: LaRussel made Heaven Sent and went to hell shortly after.

@lan_Schwartzman: I know everyone wants a deal, but you should aspire not to need one.

***ALL TWEETS ARE PUBLISHED EXACTLY HOW THEY WERE WRITTEN.**

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@DJMrStich: STOP GIVING JACKIE YOUNG THE BALL. AND PUT CHENNEDY CARTER IN THE GAME ACES.

@srtology: As long as Chennedy Carter isn't beating bitches up she's unstoppable. Her problem was never her game, it was her head. She was always mad. Looks like sitting out a year cleared her head. As long as she stays out of trouble she'll be paid in the off season.

@Tearrrrr_: Chennedy put the phone DOWN

@Gambler77Goated: Bro Chennedy Carter really gonna shoot 70% all season lmao

@whenigomissing: Chennedy would be sitting on 3-4 all star appearances and a million dollar contract if she wasn't like this

@SammyF99: Chennedy Carter is literally the only Wnba player I ever seen that comes off the bench and is playing at MVP level. Politics wont let her win the award but she definitely is a MVP

@kafkasgregor: i'm once again tweeting that i have no earthly idea how the wnba was cool without chennedy carter in it for a year

@hyubalovr: bruh ain't no way azzzi's first rival in the w bout to be chennedy charter

@jermainePAYNE: Chennedy Carter getting paid next season. Lowkey I'd like to see her in Toronto. Not sure how things are with her and Mabrey though.

@Showcolate: Chennedy Carter got "let go" from 3 different WNBA teams and a team in Turkey and we are supposed to believe all these teams were wrong? With her it's never been a skill issue... With everything that happened she hasn't learned that talent is not everything??

@sportsdyke: chennedy carter just looks like an absolute machine on offense. you can't offer her a millimeter of space or she'll body you

@xoMINDxo1: Chennedy Carter so cold. If she can just stay regulated. Lol. Like she's really special.

@aliahhhh_: it blows my mind that all the teams in the W let Chennedy Carter go to Vegas of all places lmaooooo like you cannot even be mad that she is shitting on all these other teams when they could have picked her up lol

@KirkEvans0: Chennedy Carter might be the best guard in the WNBA and two of the last four seasons she hasn't been signed due to character issues. She's on a league min contract and every single team could've signed her this offseason. What are these teams doing

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COVER
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JENNIFER SEARS

ON YOUR MARK

Words + Interview By Tyrone Davis

PHOTOS:
MARIE THOMAS



Actress Jennifer Sears has been the 3rd person this year that we have connected with when we were originally supposed to converse years ago, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we all know, there was a lot happening at the time and a lot of plans didn't pan out the way one would have liked.

It's very rare that I take issue with circumstances like that and while I may briefly feel disappointed in the moment, I always look at most matters like the timing was wrong and that their will be other opportunities in the future because what is meant for you will be for you.

Jennifer seems to share the same sentiment overall and I believe that we all must do so in order to make it in this world, especially within the entertainment space. I don't know her as a person outside of our conversation but knowing what I know about her film and television career, I can't help but to root for her.

Going and growing, Jennifer Sears definitely has a story to tell. We discussed her humble beginnings as an actress, her experiences working with film and comedic legends along the way, and her first series regular role as Bridgette in Tyler Perry's "Divorced Sistas", which is currently airing on Paramount+. "OK, Jen. We need you on your mark."

It's funny how we ended up here today. I was going through our files and came across an interview we had written up for you that we never got around to completing. Someone originally reached out to us on your behalf in 2020 but, you know.... Things happen when they are supposed to.

Exactly. I am a firm believer in that. God's timing is perfect. I'm curious. Was that for *Greenleaf* or for *Coming 2 America*, the sequel? (*The sequel*) Yes. That created a lot of a lot of buzz, actually. That was a fun project to work on, as you can imagine, with all of those comedic legends, all in one on one film. I felt like they were trying to outdo each other with the comedy and trying to make each other break character, which was great for me to sit back and watch the legends work. I'm glad that we were able to make this happen now, 6 years later...but perfect timing.

Yes, ma'am. So, let's start off with your most current project, Tyler Perry's "Divorced Sistas". Tell me all about it.

I mentioned *Coming 2 America* being fun, but this is fun in a different way because we're telling different stories, right? It's 5 women living 5 totally different lives. Naomi. Crazy Naomi (played by Porscha Coleman) and Rasheda (played by LeToya Luckett), who is the rock/pillar of the group with her religious background, being a first lady, and being also a therapist. You have Tiffany (played by Briana Price), who is the voice of reason. She's always so very stoic and graceful but she has gone through divorce and the other girls are still married, outside of Naomi.

As people have watched, Naomi has gone through a very bitter divorce and bitter is the key word, right? She's still hanging on to a lot of anger, unresolved feelings, and things that she's working

through in her own Naomi way. Then you have Geneva (played by Khadeen Indréa), who is also going through her own struggles like marital struggles with William (played by RonReaco Lee) and her affections for Javon (played by Robert Christopher Riley) who, unfortunately, she cheated on William with and (unbeknownst to William) is likely the father of their child.

Then you have my character Bridgette, who is the comic relief of the show. I would say she brings a lot of childlike wonderment in a sense that she's always trying to figure out what's going on. Not in a messy way. She's just trying to figure out what's going on in the lives of her friends so she can help. She's a helper. She's a fixer. She's the person that all her friends call on when they need something done, because they know that Bridgette is going to execute. She is first lady Rasheda's right-hand woman. She is her assistant at the church and she herself has her own relationship issues that she's trying to figure out.

She has this man child, Vaughn (played by Pierre V. Johnson) that is living in her house that she is taking care of. She is basically trying to help him step into his own power, helping him get jobs that he keeps quitting. I think she has reached her breaking point at this point in the season because everyone has their breaking point, right? You take on so much of other people's struggles and burdens that it gets to be too heavy for one person to bear. So, around episode 14, she's finally starting to step into her power, use her voice, and set and uphold boundaries, which is something that we all can learn to do.

I am very much like Bridgette in a lot of ways, so much so that when my friends and family are watching the show, they're recognizing moments where my character says something that I would say or that they've heard me say. I'm grateful that Tyler gives us that creative liberty and freedom to really step into the role of the character and bring the characters to life using our own experiences or personalities. He allows us to do it in a very collaborative way to where if there's something that is written on the text, don't go and change the script, change the context of the script. If there is content that we feel would sound more natural for us and for the character to bring the character to life in a better way then he gives us that freedom to do so.

Gotcha. This current project is a lengthy one in terms of episodes you've participated in but you've been involved in quite a few projects over the years, overall. Let's go back to the beginning. How was your journey navigating through Atlanta leading up to the pandemic and everything that came with that?

Well, my TV and film career began with Tyler (Perry). He gave me my first role. I auditioned for *Madea's Family Reunion* in 2005. We filmed that in 2005 and it was a box office hit in 2006. Now, Tyler and I have a 21-year working relationship. He was the origin of my TV and film career and now I'm working with him in my first series regular role. In that time period between my first and current projects, I've been blessed to work on so many amazing projects with so many amazing people who I never even dreamed to be working with like Miss Cicely Tyson (*Madea's Family Reunion*). Legend.



I've worked with Miss Lynn Whitfield (*Madea's Family Reunion*), who I was reunited with 10-15 years later when I worked with her on *Greenleaf*, where she played Lady Mae Greenleaf. My character, Tara James came in towards the end of the series. She was mentioned throughout season 5, but she actually came to fruition when the ownership of the Greenleaf home was being challenged. So, there was an intense battle for that home and a lot of back and forth between my character (who was the rightful owner of the home) and the Greenleafs. So, that gave me a lot of juicy moments with Miss Whitfield. She put on a masterclass every scene that she and I shared together.

The same with Keith David, who is another legend that I grew up watching. He has such a commanding presence, especially with his voice, but also has a way of making you feel like you belong here, you earned this place, you earned this role, and you're going to bring so much to the character and show. He was very encouraging and was a very generous scene partner to where he made me feel comfortable. He would ask, "Am I giving you enough? Do you need anything different from me?" and it's just like, "Dude, I can't even believe I'm here sharing this scene with you! So no, you are perfect. I don't have any notes for you, Keith David, you legend you!"

Oh gosh, we have *Bessie* (HBO Films) as well where I worked with Mo'Nique (Gertrude) and Queen Latifah (Bessie Smith), my New Jersey native sis. Queen Latifah and I were reunited again after working on *Bessie* (2015) when I worked on *Star* (2018). So, there

were a lot of reunions occurring throughout my storied 20-plus-year career. They tend to trust you after working with you more than once, you become a family, and it is less like work because you're playing opposite a friend or someone that you have grown to trust because you've worked for weeks or months on other projects with them.

Did you have a background in acting, prior to?

When I auditioned for *Madea's Family Reunion*, I didn't have an agent, manager, nor an acting background. I studied political science. I was a pre-law major. I didn't even have a headshot nor resume, which they were asking for. I literally walked into an open casting call, empty handed. They took a Polaroid picture of me and I confidently walked in with my Polaroid or walked in as confident as I could be, because I didn't know what to expect, right? I wasn't an actor at that point so I really didn't have any nervousness or anything like that because I didn't know what rejection felt like at that time. So, I wasn't nervous and I booked that role.

There have been so many opportunities leading up to *Coming 2 America*. Working alongside Arsenio Hall and opposite and sharing the same space as Eddie Murphy, Tracy Morgan, and Leslie Jones was mind blowing. I grew up watching and following them in their stand-up comedy careers and on *SNL* (*Saturday Night Live*), which I absolutely love. *Coming to America* (1988), was actually the film that inspired me to act. I wanted to act ever since I was six years old. It's beautiful to see how God works.

Awesome. You said you were from New Jersey, originally? What brought you to Georgia?

I'm originally from Paterson, New Jersey. That's where my roots are. My family relocated to Dublin, Georgia and that became a second home. Dublin welcomed us and that's where I got my southern hospitality. I have a southern mother. So, I'm fortunate to say I have the urban tough street upbringing and the street smarts as well as the southern hospitality that Dublin, Georgia afforded me.

Being in the Atlanta area for awhile, I've met so many people that have gotten their start here, starting with background roles and then moving their way up so to hear you say you started with Tyler Perry and now you have a series regular role is amazing to see.

Right?! I still sit and wonder how that happened. When I tell people and other actors my story it's like, "Wait, wait, wait. Your first role was a speaking role?" and not only a speaking role, but the film was a box office hit! Who can say that?! It still blows my mind because I remember being on set and not knowing what base camp was, or who a PA was and what they do. I was calling everybody a producer. I had to learn the terminology, the language, and the linguistics of the industry and know what my mark was. I felt like such a novice when they would say, "OK Jen, we need you on your mark." and I'm sitting there and looking at them like, "Here?!". They had to basically take me by the hand and guide me. But, they were so patient because they understood that wasn't my background.

I remember when Mr Perry found me at the wrap party for *Madea's Family Reunion*. I had been there for awhile with my friend Moesha and he came in and said, "Jen, don't go anywhere." I was so scared. I thought I did something wrong. I thought I did a horrible job and that they were going to take me out of the movie. My mind started running, trying to figure out what I did. And so my best friend Mo goes, "What did you do?!" I was like, "I don't know!" He circles the room making his rounds and saying "Hi" to people and then comes to me and goes, "I need you to do me a favor." I'm like,

"Yeah, anything. What is it?" and he goes, "I need you to go to the bar." I'm thinking he wants me to get a drink for him because he's too busy. He is Tyler Perry, you know? He goes, "I need you to dig way deep and make sure it's cool." I started laughing like, "Oh, I see what you're doing. You're doing the scene from the movie." Lol, he was very encouraging and told me he understood this project was my start but not to stop here and to keep going because I had a bright future ahead of me. He said, "Nothing is given. Everything is earned." At that point I understood what he was saying.

So, after *Madea's Family Reunion*, I didn't book another role for about 10-12 years, so I used that time to become a sponge and student of the craft. I studied everything from Lee Strasberg and



Uta Hagen, to Stella Adler and Sanford Meisner and Konstantin Stanislavski. All of the methods, right? I studied improv. I also did sketch comedy for 7 or 8 years. I just did anything and everything that I thought would help me become a well-versed actress with lots of tools in her toolbox so I could pull out anything a character required of me.

Now, in reference to Tyler Perry's "Divorced Sistas", when and where does the show air?

The show is streaming on Paramount+ on Wednesdays. For those who haven't seen it, you have to prepare yourselves because we start off with a bang and that drama intensifies with each episode each week. It's something that I believe

everyone can get something from, like the wit and humor of Bridgette. Bridgette also goes through her dramatic moments where she needs her girls, right? She needs her sisterhood, her tribe. There are a lot of lessons that you can pull from. You can learn forgiveness, healing, and letting go of the bitterness. At the same time, the entire focus isn't just about the romantic relationship aspect of the show, but also about the importance of friendship. People will see that buried underneath the drama there's a lot of friendship and love there.

To keep up with Jennifer Sears, visit her on Instagram @iamjensears.

CHEF FRANCO LANIA

COOK FOR LIFE

Words + Interview By Tyrone Davis

PHOTOS BY DAVID VERDINI

Chef Franco Lania has quite a story and I identified with more aspects of his life than I initially thought I would. Speaking with him highlighted how people's lives can be affected by the same events or life experiences even if they have never met nor interacted with each other.

Having survived the September 11 attacks by escaping the south tower, Franco discusses how cooking became therapeutic for him in the aftermath, his new book "Cooking Inspired: Design Your Dish Design Your Life", the origins of his cooking journey, living abroad, and more. I really enjoyed our conversation and I hope you all feel the same.

Let's start with your backstory. How did you grow up and what led you into the culinary world?

I grew up in New Jersey, about 30 minutes from New York City. My parents got divorced as I was entering my freshman year of high school. It was a very bad split, and after that, I went wild for the longest time. What led me to the culinary world was my dad. Once I graduated from high school, he took me to a local gourmet supermarket to get me a job. He thought it would keep me out of trouble, teach me about being responsible, and earn my own money.

Describe what culinary school looks like in terms of the curriculum. In general, what type of information do you all learn that people may not know about preparing meals?

Culinary school is structured into distinct levels of expertise: basic,

intermediate, and advanced cuisine. At a cooking school, you'll master essential skills, such as safely handling a chef's knife, creating classic sauces, and executing proper cooking techniques with confidence. Most of these techniques are grounded in French cuisine, so you'll become familiar with important culinary terms and vocabulary in French, enriching your cooking knowledge and skills.

On September 11, 2001, I was a teenager living on a military base in Kentucky. I recall my art teacher turning on the television after the first tower had already been attacked. We thought it was an accident until the 2nd plane hit. After watching the towers fall, the school sent us all home. There was chaos in the hallways, students and faculty were panicked, and war was being discussed heavily, especially since our parents were soldiers. What do you remember about that day, and what led you to NYC?

I had recently returned to New York City after studying and working in a Michelin-starred restaurant in Italy. In the days leading up to September 11th, I was on a job hunt across Manhattan, eager to find work now that I was back in the United States. I secured a great position as a sous chef at a new, trendy Italian restaurant that was about to open in SoHo. The only requirement was that I needed to take and pass a Department of Health test to be officially hired, which is standard practice in food-handling jobs.

I was given three locations to choose from in the city for the test, and I opted for the World Trade Center location since it was

closest to my home. This was a citywide proctored test, meaning many others would be taking it for their jobs as well. The test was scheduled for 9 a.m. in Tower Two on September 11th. This is why I was in the building on that tragic day.

When talking about life-altering events and the aftermath of them, life for us changed dramatically immediately. We were under lockdown, and getting onto the base became extremely difficult. Teachers who didn't live on it were sitting in lines at the gates so long that some would miss the whole school day. Every entering vehicle was being checked thoroughly, and there were soldiers posted on every corner in tanks, jeeps with machine guns on the back, etc.

It took years for that to simmer down, and many of the soldiers got deployed, which caused a domino effect on the local economy. I say all that because we were almost 1,000 miles away from you at the time, but we had a lot of that trauma. I still believe nothing compares to being on-site at the time, though. How was your life changed afterward, and how did you manage, overcome, etc.?

After being evacuated from the second tower, I found myself caught up in the unfolding nightmare that was consuming lower Manhattan. I won't delve into all the shocking details, but the experience felt surreal. Tragically, it was all too real and absolutely heartbreaking. My life was instantly changed; I began to question the significance of everything I had been doing with my career and in my life up to that point. The pursuit of my dream as a chef—working alongside famous chefs and learning their secret recipes—seemed utterly trivial after witnessing what had transpired. The real heroes on that day were the first responders and the brave everyday people who risked their lives to help others. I found myself no longer wanting to cook, feeling the need to move on from the culinary path I had been so deeply invested in.

Eventually, I overcame these feelings by returning to cooking, but with a completely different mindset. I started to focus on the fundamental aspects of the craft, such as chopping, washing ingredients, sautéing, and dicing. Engaging with these simple elements of a recipe helped draw me into the moment. It was within this process that I discovered the invigorating energy and healing power of cooking. I go much deeper into this in my book *Cooking Inspired*.

Tell me about your book, *Cooking Inspired: Design Your Dish, Design Your Life*. Using food as medicine is normally looked at from a physical standpoint. How does it also help with mental health?

My book is an inspirational memoir that highlights the importance of cooking, not just as a necessity but as a source of positive energy. While I don't view food purely as medicine, it can certainly

have that effect. I emphasize the physical act of cooking and the invigorating energy we can gain from even the simplest meal preparations.

Cooking can be incredibly beneficial for mental health. When we are struggling or facing adversity, one of the first things that tends to suffer is our eating habits. We often neglect proper nutrition during tough times, leading to a downward spiral where our minds and bodies miss out on essential nutrients. This lack of nourishment can hinder our ability to think clearly and develop a



plan to overcome the challenges in our lives.

Engaging in even the most basic cooking for ourselves is crucial for pulling ourselves up when we feel overwhelmed. I delve deeply into this topic in my book, and I believe that many people can benefit from this perspective if they approach it with an open mind.

Why is every day a good day for making potato gnocchi? Also, describe the dish.

Potato gnocchi is one of my all time favorite things to make. The reason why every day is a good day to make it is the simple fact that when made right, it is an absolutely delicious and comforting dish to eat.

For someone like me, who is only familiar with the Americanized versions of Italian food (pizza, spaghetti, chicken alfredo, etc.), what would be the best 4-course meal for me to have that is authentically Italian?

An authentic Italian meal consisting of four courses could start with an appetizer of Bruschetta al Pomodoro with Burrata. For the main course, you could enjoy Tagliatelle al Ragù alla Bolognese, followed by Veal Saltimbocca alla Romana. To finish, you could indulge in a classic Tiramisu or Affogato al Caffè for dessert.

Tell me about your partnership with Tavola Tours.

I returned to college and earned my Bachelor's Degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Florida

International University in Miami, Florida. Tavola Tours is a boutique travel company that specializes in culinary and cultural adventures in Italy. We have many repeat travelers who participate in our fun and educational tours, and it has truly become a dream come true for me to open a travel company and build such a strong following among our travel groups.

What do you enjoy most about cooking at sea?

What I enjoyed most of all from being a cruise line chef was the extensive travel I got to experience, working with, and meeting people from all over the world.

I traveled around Europe a little bit growing up due to us being stationed in Germany for a few years. However, we never got around to visiting Italy, but I specifically remember meeting a new kid in 4th grade who had just moved to Germany from there. It has always stood out to me because he was the only person I knew at the time who had been or lived there. In what ways does Italy differ from the rest of Europe?

Italy is known as the "Queen of the Mediterranean!" It is situated, stretched out in all its glory, in the heart of the Mediterranean. It

has been a crossroads of culture, gastronomy, and religion for millennia. This is what makes Italy so very special and different from the rest of Europe.

Name 5 great things about Palinuro.

Palinuro is a beautiful coastal village in the southern part of the Cilento National Park area, located in the Campania region of Italy. Five great things about this beautiful location are.

- 1) Spectacular Sea Caves
- 2) The Mythological History
- 3) Pristine, Secluded Beaches
- 4) Exceptional Scuba Diving
- 5) And of course, the authentic cuisine

Tell us about your experience on Food Network's 24-Hour Restaurant Battle.

I had the opportunity to compete on Food Network's 24-Hour Restaurant Battle not once, but twice. In my first appearance, I was selected by two models to join their team, and we dominated the challenge, coming out on top. I returned for a second round, was chosen for another team, and once again, we secured victory.

Having accomplished

as much as you have in the culinary world, what makes a great chef?

What makes me a great chef is the fact that after almost 30 years, I am still at it and have never given up.

Tell me something about yourself that most don't know.

I am obsessed with Reese's Peanut Butter Cups!

Lastly, how can people keep up with you and your work?

People can keep up with me by visiting my chef website at www.francolania.com, on the Tavola Tours website at www.tavolatours.com, and of course, on Facebook or Instagram by searching Chef Franco Lania.



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CHECK ME OUT

DALEY LAVENDER



suspended state that exists between two people whose connection has become so consuming that the outside world dissolves completely.

Written from a place of both memory and manifestation, "Lavender" romanticizes fleeting moments of closeness and chemistry between lovers, lifting them into a hazy, transcendent purple light representing the emotional frequency between two stripped of the inhibitions and identities that define them day to day. "There are new colors that appear / when you're here with me," Daley sings, as the song drifts deeper into themes of emotional freedom, sensuality and surrender. The result is a record inviting listeners to disconnect from the noise outside and lose themselves in a softer, more blissful state of feeling.



Still rooted in soul, but unafraid of experimentation, "Lavender" embraces cinematic textures, emotional honesty and fearless vocal expression, reaffirming Daley as an artist committed not to trends or algorithms, but to timeless feeling, depth and human connection.

To learn more about Daley, visit him at www.daley.tv.
Submission courtesy of Ra-Fael Blanco at 2R's Entertainment & Media PR (for The SRG/ILS Group).

Making this his first music release since 2018, multi-faceted R&B soul singer, Daley returns to the music scene with his smash new single "Lavender", a lush, immersive meditation on intimacy, escapism and emotional surrender. Written and produced by Daley and genre-bending UK producer Swindle, the track opens with a cinematic flourish of orchestral strings before unfolding into knocking percussion, jazz-inflected guitar chords (Tom Ford) and soaring layered vocals that feel both intimate and otherworldly.

Existing somewhere between alternative R&B, soul and a dreamlike late-night confession, "Lavender" captures the

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