

Chris Tucker tickles our funny bones as he tours SA

 By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

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I remember American actor and stand-up comedian, Chris Tucker mostly from the blockbuster *Rush Hour* movies where he featured with co-star, Jackie Chan. But before *Rush Hour*, Tucker played Smokey in *Friday*, he featured in Luc Besson's *Fifth Element* and in Quentin Tarantino's *Jackie Brown*. He was also in *Money Talks* and *Silver Linings Playbook*. Yes, we've seen Chris on the big screen a couple of times and I was glad that I could see him live on stage as he entertained the Cape Town crowd (huge, huge fans of Smokey from *Friday*) last Wednesday night at the GrandWest Arena in Cape Town.



Chris Tucker, live at the GrandWest Arena in Cape Town. © Lance Peterson.

It was these very characters that graced the big screens in the venue as the show commenced. We saw Tucker in scenes from all of the movies mentioned, repeating his most memorable lines, as the clip played to introduce his 90-minute stand-up comedy show. He appeared on stage, donning a black sequin tuxedo jacket. What else were you expecting? Come on, this was Chris Tucker! The man came to entertain and with that jacket on we knew he meant business.

You rock my world

It's funny but Tucker's distinctive voice just makes you smile, grinning from ear to ear before he's even told a single joke. It is so unique and really a shame that he hasn't been asked to voice an animated character in a movie yet. I'm sure he'd be an instant hit and so would the character.

His set was hilariously funny and relied on the familiarity of the characters he's portrayed and the famous celebrities he's met or befriended over the years. It drew the audience in, who were obviously curious to know more about these very famous personalities. And then the punchlines followed, making you wonder just for a second if this could be a real story or a tall tale, which I believe is a natural trait of a good storyteller. You just never know.

We particularly loved the stories he shared about the late Michael Jackson. Tucker reminded us that he was, in fact, in one of the pop star's music videos. Remember the song, *You Rock My World*? We were crying with laughter when he described dancing on the set with Jackson and then one day visiting Jackson at his ranch, Neverland. His impersonations were spot on! The dancing, the voice, the mannerisms. For us, this was the highlight of the show.

Immersive experience

As a performer, Tucker is very animated on stage. He brings a lot of energy (and a lot of goddammits) and listening to him is actually a bit of an immersive experience. Often during his set, he was running up and down on stage, demonstrating a certain situation (perhaps also getting some cardio in?), and making us feel as if we were right there with him when it happened.

Although I usually try to go to stand-up shows fairly open-minded, there were a couple of cringe-worthy moments with regards to stereotyping and so forth. But Tucker kind of reminds you of that uncle you see during family get-togethers who your mother tries to shush because he's always saying the most random, un-PC things but still you recognise that he's just being real and genuine and thus always gets everyone to laugh regardless.

Down memory lane

Tucker told stories about Michael and Whitney and even belted out a few songs for us to remember them by. We also heard about him meeting Madiba when he was here in SA with former US president, Bill Clinton. He spoke a lot about American politics and about Trump and did a really good impression of Trump as well. And then he broke our hearts when he confirmed that there will not be another *Friday*.

There was even a surprise near the end when Tucker spilt the beans about American rapper/actor T.I. being in the audience, currently in town shooting a movie. I'd say he managed to cover all the bases, laugh, cringe, reminisce, surprise! All-in-all, final verdict; he really did deserve the standing ovation the crowd gave him as he said good night.

Those who enjoyed the show can look forward to another American comedian touring South Africa later this month right

into December; Dave Chappelle is coming! Check out dates and other information here:



Dave Chappelle to tour South Africa for the first time

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ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

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