

There's nothing ludicrous about Christopher Bridges aka Ludacris', career.

The Atlanta rapper's release "The Red Light District" (Disturbing The Peace/Def Jam South), which hit U.S. stores Dec. 7, is expected to be one of the holiday season's top sellers.

Earlier this year, Ludacris took part in the runaway success of Usher's Grammy-nominated anthem "Yeah!" as a guest along with Lil Jon. The threesome is headed back to the top of the R&B and pop charts with "Lovers and Friends," a cut from Lil Jon and the East Side Boyz" recently released album "Crunk Juice."

On top of these successes, Ludacris has signed two major deals. The first is an exclusive worldwide pact with Universal Music Publishing Group. His Disturbing Tha Peace label has also entered a 50/50 partnership with Island Def Jam, building upon what is described as their "product furnishing arrangement." (Disturbing Tha Peace retains its other affiliations, such as a deal with Capitol for the release of posse member I-20's debut album "Self Explanatory").

Looking ahead, Ludacris will be involved with acting in two movies in 2005, "Hustle & Flow" and "Crash"; music releases by new Disturbing Tha Peace artists, including rock act Lazy Eye and R&B artist Bobby V; and projects for his youth-targeted nonprofit organization the Ludacris Foundation.

"The Red Light District" is the fourth Disturbing Tha Peace/Def Jam South release for Ludacris. His most recent album, "Chicken-N-Beer," debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 in 2003, and has sold 2.5 million copies to date, according to Nielsen SoundScan. His best seller is "Word of Mouf" (2001) which is at 3.4 million. The prior album, "Back for the First Time" (2000) is approaching 3 million units.

The new release reveals a more introspective side of the fun-loving rapper. The lead single,

Luda Rapping and Harmonizing

Written by Keith ID555

Sunday, 12 December 2004 13:50 -

"Get Back," is currently No. 20 on the Hit R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart. He will perform it on Spike TV's "Video Game Awards," which the male-oriented cable network will air live on Dec. 14; reports [Reuters/Billboard](#)

"You've got to reinvent yourself and keep people guessing," Ludacris says. "So there's more experimentation on this album, It's hard to explain, but I'm rapping and harmonizing at the same time; my voice is doing different things; my voice is doing different things. And I get more personal on some of the songs."

Another example is "Large Amounts," in which the rapper ponders financial success in the context of his relations with the Internal Revenue Service, women and family members.

Ludacris drafted a number of high-profile rap colleagues for the album, as well as a mix of established and new producers. The mix includes Timbaland, Nate Dogg, DJ Quik, DMX, Organized Noize and DJ Green Lantern.

Bobby V guests on "Pimpin' All Around the World," while "Not Me" showcases Disturbing Tha Peace acts Small World and Dolla Boi.

Ludacris joins Nas and beatbox legend Doug E. Fresh on "Virgo"; the track also appears on Nas' just-released "Street's Disciple."

Ludacris also displays his fondness for the "Austin Powers" film series on "Number One Spot," a potential second single. The song takes to task conservative commentator Bill O'Reilly of Fox's "The O'Reilly Factor." Two years ago, O'Reilly's comments about Ludacris' lyrics led to the rapper being dropped as a Pepsi spokesman.