

Hip-Hop Favorite Chappelle Show Seems Over

Written by Robert ID1750

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It seems that the Dave Chappelle show, that has gathered a cult like following in the hip-hop culture, is over.

That is the thought of Dave Chappelle collaborator Charlie Murphy says about Comedy Central's wildly popular "Chappelle's Show," which has been on hiatus since last April, when Chappelle mysteriously left the country on what he called a "spiritual retreat" to South Africa.

Fans had been hopeful that Chappelle would return to finish the show's third season, but Murphy says not to hold your breath.

"I don't think Dave is going to do anymore," Murphy tells The Post.

"We shot about eight shows for the third season, and they're hilarious. They'll be released on DVD, I'm sure. But that's it."

Murphy should know. He's the "True Hollywood Stories" guy, whose real-life tales of hanging out with his younger brother, Eddie Murphy, and Rick James led to that ubiquitous "Chappelle's Show" catchphrase, "I'm Rick James, bitch!"

Murphy played himself in the "True Hollywood Stories" segments and was a writer on the show. Now he's doing stand-up comedy, including headlining at the Times Square comedy club Caroline's On Broadway from Aug. 11-14.

Chappelle, who walked away from a Comedy Central deal worth nearly \$50 million, has been working on new stand-up material this summer.

"He probably wants to put a big show together, then put it on the road," Murphy says, adding that he still doesn't know why his boss pulled that disappearing act last spring.

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Just the day before Chappelle left the country, he, Murphy and co-star Donnell Rawlings had filmed a skit called "Monsters, Inc." for the third season.

"It was hilarious," Murphy recalls. "I was Frankenstein. Dave was The Wolfman. Donnell was The Mummy. We were living together and experiencing problems, because we're monsters. But I thought it was because I was black that all these things were happening, not because I was Frankenstein.

"It was all fun, very normal," Murphy recalls.

But the next day, he came into work and Chappelle was gone.

"The ball's in Dave's court," Comedy Central's president, Doug Herzog, told reporters recently. "If you see him, tell him to phone home."