Spotted



Retired British boxer Chris Eubank (left) at Carluccio's in Souk Al Bahar, gawping at the Dubai

Fountains (and looking great for 45). Formula One legend Michael Schumacher chatting to fans at Dubai airport. Hugo, Spencer, Millie and Louise from *Made in Chelsea* running amok at N'Dulge.

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Hot seat Ne-Yo

The chart-smashing, Grammy Award-winning R&B sensation, 31, lands in Dubai this week to headline the Atelier Live Dance Arena festival. *Rob Garratt* says hi



You're working on a new album. What's it like?

If I do anything, I want to sound good. A bit of dance stuff, a bit of R&B – trying to please all the people all of the time, that's me.

Looking forward to coming to Dubai?

I was in Dubai once before, although I was upset at how short [my time there] was. I didn't get a chance to see everything I wanted. It's one of those places you can't do in a few hours then leave.

Speaking of cities, how was it growing up in Vegas?

Las Vegas isn't as crazy as people think – you think of the strip, but the strip is just one street in the city where everyone hangs out. But as far as living there goes, it wasn't

all that exciting. In all honesty it was a bit boring.

What advice would you give that Vegas kid today?

I'd tell him to keep going. I'm walking, talking, living, breathing proof that if you

'If you got it, you got it, and if you don't, you don't'

keep going and don't let go, you can do anything.

So, let's get this straight: you're named after the guy in *The Matrix*?

It started out as a joke. I didn't like it at first, I thought it was kind of conceited – in the film Neo is the saviour of the world

and I'm just trying to make music. It just stuck.

You'd written songs for Michael Jackson before he died. How upsetting was his death for you?

Michael Jackson was part of the reason I do this. Everything happens for a reason. I don't know what's going to happen to these songs. They're just sitting there.

Your third album is called Year of the Gentlemen. What makes a good gentleman?

A gentleman understands the power of chivalry, who is a good listener as well as a good talker, who understands that dressing the part makes a world of difference, who knows the difference between being bold and confident versus being cocky. He's the guy who every guy wants to be, and everybody wants to be with.

Sounds a lot like you.

I do my thing. I can't say I'm the ideal, but I'm definitely a work in progress.

You're certainly a slick-looking guy – any grooming tips?

There's no real secret besides being blessed with the ability to look good in a suit. If you got it, you got it, and if you don't, you don't.

What's the future of music?

It's very hard to imagine. Music happens in waves: something will come along, be cool, and then go away or be replaced. There are a few things that will always be there: a melody that's infectious, lyrics that are relatable, and a track that makes you feel something. They're the three elements I put into my music. Those are the integral things that will always be there. Ne-Yo plays Atelier Live

Dance Arena on Friday April 6.
www.timeouttickets.com

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