

# Panel Discusses Role of Terms That Degrade Women

**BEATS & RHYMES** from front page

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documentary, “I had to go to the bathroom but I held it in to the very end to hear all the truth.”

Other panel members included rapper Talib Kweli, activists Bryan Mercer, CC '07 and a member of the Columbia Student Coalition on Expansion and Gentrification and Students Promoting Empowerment and Knowledge, Lumumba Akinwole-Bandele, a Brooklyn community organizer, and performing artist Piper Anderson, all of whom spoke about their roles in the hip-hop culture and the “box” mentality.

“I critique and I criticize in my music,” Kweli said. “I don’t let the box limit me, but at the same

time I recognize what it is.”

“A lot of people who watch [music] videos get caught up in perception versus reality,” Kweli added. “It feels like death” in the box, Anderson said.

Yet panelists were hopeful about positive changes, as long as young people find new role models who espouse social awareness.

“When we begin to change the images, that helps,” Akinwole-Bandele said. The crowd lauded the film and panelists with a standing ovation.

“It’s a complicated issue and I think it came to light very well,” Paco Martin Del Campo, CC '11, said. “This was kind of like, for me, the granddaddy of all panels.”

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# Hip-Hop Culture Forced to Reexamine Itself

BY BETSY MORAIS

COLUMBIA DAILY SPECTATOR

Hip-hop artists flocked to Teachers College Monday evening for a film screening and to discuss representations of sexism, homophobia, and manhood in rap music.

The event featured music and a screening of the film *Beyond Beats and Rhymes* by activist Byron Hunt. It was sponsored by a diverse array of groups ranging from TC's Black Student Network and to the Multicultural Greek Council.

"I began to feel very conflicted about the music that I loved," Hunt said of his beloved hip-hop in the film. "I was like, 'Yo, I need to make a film that breaks all this stuff down.'"

A diverse crowd packed into the Cowin Center Auditorium as a DJ pumped hip-hop music through the hall.

"I'm here to say that hip-hop ain't dead, he just needs to get free!" rapper and activist Tim'm T. West called out. Wearing a T-shirt that read, "This is what a feminist looks like," he kicked off the evening with some of his music.

"If it's not intelligent, if it's not moving us to a better place, then it's not hip-hop," said rapper Channel Live, who also performed.

In the film, Hunt interviewed rappers such as Fat Joe and Busta Rhymes, rap music executives, hip-hop experts, and teenagers immersed in hip-hop culture, confronting stereotypes and seeking the sources of what he finds to be a hostile, misogynist mindset in the rap world.

In the film, Hunt asked aspiring young rappers why they are "so preoccupied with gunplay," and whether it is okay to call women "bitches and hos." They felt that derogatory terms for women differentiated between "sisters" whom



Linda Carrion/ Staff Photographer

*Beyond Beats and Rhymes*, a film by Byron Hunt, was screened Monday night at the Cowin Center Auditorium. Rappers Talib Kweli, Tim'm T. West, and Channel Live all performed before the screening.

they respect, and "bitches," who they do not.

Hunt then asked women for their views about such names, yet they assured Hunt no one was referring to them in those terms, and that it was merely entertainment.

Violence "is selling like motherfucking hot flowers," rapper Jadakiss said in the film. But he added, "At the end of the day, it's business. I'm just trying to feed my daughter."

Hunt also addressed homophobia and homophobia in the film. "We're, like, in this box," Hunt explained. "In order to be in that box, you've got to be strong, you've got to be tough,

you've got to get a lot of girls." Hunt claimed this focus on hyper-masculinity alienates some homosexuals, yet the glorifying of the brawny male image brought up discussion about homophobia.

"There's an idea that, if we let the fag in, somehow we're gonna destroy hip-hop, it's gonna bust," Tim'm West, who is gay, said in the panel discussion after the film screening.

The panel opened with performance poet La Bruja, who commented that during the

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