

FUNERAL A PLEA TO STOP THE VIOLENCE - THOUSANDS TURN OUT TO MOURN PROOF

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With some of **the** biggest names in hip-hop among more than 2,000 mourners Wednesday at **the funeral** for Detroit rap pioneer Proof, musicians joined **the** clergy in calling for an end **to** gun violence .

Detroit rapper Obie Trice, **a** colleague of Proof and rap superstar Eminem, decried **violence** like that in which Proof and Detroiters Keith Bender Jr., 35, were killed last week at an after-hours club on **the** east side.

"I want **to** talk **to the** black men in here that's coming up in **the** hood, coming up in **the** struggle," said Trice, who has **a** bullet lodged in his skull from being shot on New Year's Eve.

"We're killing each other, dawg," he said through tears. "And it's about nothing. Nothing. Nothing. We're all dying. And we're leaving our kids. Our mommas. Our grandmas. Over nothing."

In **a** long, thundering eulogy for Proof, 32, whose legal name was Deshaun Holton, **the** Rev. Wendell Anthony called **violence** " **the** madness that is infecting" Detroit.

"Our community suffered **the** loss of another young man," Anthony told mourners who included such rap stars **as** Dr. Dre, 50 Cent, Xzibit, Treach from Naughty By Nature and D12 members Bizarre, Kuniva and Kon Artis, Young Buck and Eminem, Proof's best friend.

" **The** other family has also suffered **a** loss," he said of Bender's relatives.

" **The** tears have been shed. Other tears will be shed. It's time for us **to stop** shedding needless tears," Anthony told **the** crowd inside **the** sanctuary of Detroit's Fellowship Chapel.

Gun **violence** is on **the** rise in Detroit. Already this year, **the** city has logged more than 110 homicides and 340 nonfatal shootings - nearly **a** 25% increase reported by police compared with **the** same time last year.

Police officials have repeatedly implored residents **to** quit turning **to** guns **to** solve problems. Last week, Chief Ella Bully-Cummings said **the** department is working with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies **to** create **a** crime-reduction strategy.

The funeral , which lasted almost three hours, was an emotional event, with those in attendance struggling **to** make sense of **the** violent way two lives ended. Police responded **to a** threat that there was **a** bomb outside **the** church but found no evidence of explosives.

Mourners began lining up for **the** service about 8 a.m., and several hundred people were not able **to** get into **the** church because it was filled **to** capacity.

Inside, friends of Proof said he wasn't **the** man described by police since **the** incident: someone who pistol-whipped an unarmed man and shot him in **the** head.

Authorities have said Proof shot Bender at **the** C.C.C Club on 8 Mile at 4:30 a.m. April 11 after **a** fight. Another man - Bender's cousin - then shot Proof three times in **the** head and chest. Proof died almost immediately. Bender died Tuesday at St. John Hospital and Medical Center. Prosecutors, who are seeking witnesses, charged Bender's cousin, Mario Etheridge, with gun violations but not murder.

"I want **to** give you an idea of **the** Deshaun I knew," said an emotional and visibly worn out Eminem, who had Proof serve **as** his best man at his wedding earlier this year. "This is **the** same man that when I was 16 years old, came over **to the** east side, took **a** pair of shoes and said, 'Put them on.' I said, 'Put what on?' and he said, 'These shoes, because I'm tired of you wearing them dirty-ass shoes.' I apologize for cussing in church, but that's what he said."

The hip-hop megastar added: "He taught me how **to** be **a** leader. I'm sure everybody who has ever met him, even just once, can testify **to the** fact that he illuminated **a** room when he walked in it. I believe that Proof loved people and people loved him. He was **a** magnet. He lured you in. You wanted **to** learn about him, follow his swagger. Without Proof, there would be no Eminem, no Slim Shady, no D12."

Others echoed Eminem's sentiments, recalling stories of how despite his fame and success, Proof came back **to the** city **to** help others who wanted **to** make it in **the** entertainment industry.

" **The** bottom line is: Leave your guns at home," said local recording artist Amp Fiddler, 46. "People need **to** unify more in **the** hip-hop community and everywhere."

Rapper Juan of **the** Street Lordz, **a** friend of both Proof and Blade Icewood, **a** Detroit rapper who was killed by gun **violence** **a** year ago Wednesday, spoke at **the** services about **the** lessons that Proof taught him, mainly how **to** rap and how **to** talk **to** women.

"My boy is dead for nothing. That's **the** message I got," he said later. "You see all these people together, but that's not going **to** bring him back."

Proof's body was carried off in **a** horse-drawn antique carriage from **the** church at Southfield and Outer Drive **to the** burial site, Woodlawn Cemetery on Woodward Avenue near 8 Mile. **The** procession of more than **a** dozen stretch white limos, black and green stretch Hummers and hundreds of cars tied up traffic for more than two hours.

(SIDEBARS)

SWIFT SKIPS COURT

Ondre Moore, aka Swift, is **a** wanted man.

The 31-year-old Novi resident and member of **the** rap group D12 failed **to** appear in court **as** required after attending **the funeral** of another member, Proof, on Wednesday, prompting Judge Brian MacKenzie **to** issue **a** warrant for his arrest.

The hearing in 52-1 District Court in Novi had been scheduled **to** determine whether Moore violated **the** terms of his probation. MacKenzie said he gave Moore until **a** few minutes past 4 p.m. **to** show up in court for **the** hearing, which was scheduled for 1:30 p.m.

MacKenzie set Moore's bail at \$500,000.

Moore could not be reached for comment.

Moore pleaded guilty Oct. 17 **to** operating **a** vehicle while visibly impaired, **a** misdemeanor punishable by up **to** 93 days in jail. **The** same day, MacKenzie said, Moore tested positive for using illegal drugs and was sent **to** jail for two days.

Ten days later, Moore was sentenced **to** two years of probation, 50 hours of community service and ordered **to** attend Alcoholics Anonymous and stay away from alcohol and drugs.

In March, Moore tested positive for alcohol and was later sentenced **to a** week in jail, MacKenzie said. Last week, Moore tested positive again for alcohol, **the** judge said - leading **to the** court hearing.

Moore could be sentenced **to up to** 93 days in jail, if MacKenzie determines Moore violated his probation.

Novi Police Lt. Victor Lauria said **the** department was aware of **the** warrant and - unless Moore turns himself in **to** police or **the** court - officers would attempt **to** find him.

Frank Witsil and Gina Damron

2ND FUNERAL PENDING

Funeral arrangements for 35-year-old Keith Bender Jr., who died **a** week after authorities say Detroit rapper Proof shot him in **the** face, were pending Wednesday **as** Bender's body remained at **the** Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office.

Official autopsy results are pending, but initial findings corroborated police's theory that Bender was shot once in **the** face, leading **to** his death.

Amber Hunt

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo ERIC SEALS Detroit Free Press

CAPTION: Pallbearers accompany rapper Proof's casket **to a** horse-drawn carriage at Fellowship Chapel in Detroit on Wednesday. At right is 1st Born, president of Iron Fist Records. **The** pallbearer at left is unidentified. More than 2,000 people crowded **the** church for **the funeral** .

At right, local radio personality Bushman, left, greets DJ House Shoes outside **the** church before **the funeral** of Proof, below, whose legal name was Deshaun Holton.

ERIC SEALS/Detroit Free Press

Outside Fellowship Chapel, Chuck Mays, 31, of Detroit watches **a** hearse carrying flowers toward **the** horse-drawn carriage. Mays is **a** first cousin of Proof.

FOLLOWING CUTLINES RAN WITH SIDEBARS ON PAGE 13A:

Ondre Moore, aka Swift, of D12 could get jail time.

Keith Bender Jr.

CAPTIONWRITER: ERIC SEALS/Detroit Free Press

MEMO: SIDEBARS ATTACHED;SEE ALSO STATE EDITION, PAGE 1A

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