

# Nas And Michael Eric Dyson Discuss Hip-Hop At Georgetown University

Nas and Michael Eric Dyson talk about *Illmatic* and hip-hop's recent role in the academy during a discussion at Georgetown University.

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## Versus Hip Hop On Trial Debate

[youtube]r3-7Y0xG89Q[/youtube]

A cast of thinkers, rappers, poets and academics assembled in London on June 26th at the Barbican for the Intelligence Squared and Google+ debate titled, 'Hip-Hop on Trial: Hip-Hop Doesn't Enhance Society, It Degrades it.' The debate was streamed live and moderated by Jemima Khan who took questions from online posters. The problem with all of these 'Hip-Hop is bad, dead or going to the dogs' debates is that they are always centered around a very slim segment of corporatized hip-hop. So what happens is that people are debating the merits of hip-hop based on a small section of music instead of "Is The Corporation Promoting A Certain Kind Of Hip-Hop And Why." It is especially shameful that Versus would promote this kind of discourse in 2012 when we live in a digital age where people are grabbing all kinds of music from everywhere. And this kind of focus keeps hip-hop in a subjugated place when it is still empowering people all around the world. How can the

most popular art form of the past 30 years not function at all as folk music because of the music business establishment? These type of “intellectual” notions are the reason why Ice-T just released *Something From Nothing: The Art Of Rap*. No matter how ridiculous Lil’ Wayne may look hip-hop still saved his life and is doing the same for several kids around the globe who will never reach his commercial status. It is also important for hip-hop fans to understand that hip-hop is the only popular art form that Blacks still dominate hence the singularity of Eminem. So to say that the music is “dead” destructive” etc. is tantamount to racism because you are blaming people of color creatives for society’s problems. The nasty things that some rappers say may not be pleasant to hear but it’s important that society hear their outsider status because it tells us what needs to improve. These kind of propaganda attacks disguised as “debates” totally ignore the fact people on this very panel like Q-Tip, KRS-One and The Roots defy all of these static ideas about hip-hop.

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## **“The Intellectual’s Dilemma”: 2009 Callaloo Conference To Feature Michael Eric Dyson, Rita Dove And Houston Baker March 25-28**

March 16, 2009 – Have African-American intellectuals abandoned the Civil Rights Movement? Do black academics need to reengage the larger community, and if so, how? What is the relationship between contemporary politics and popular culture?

Some of the nation's most prominent African-American writers and thinkers will address these questions and more during the 2009 Callaloo Conference, which takes place March 25-28 at Washington University in St. Louis.



Rita Dove

Other events will include readings by Pulitzer Prize-winning poets Rita Dove and Yusef Komunyakaa, respectively at 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday, March 26 and 27. Panel discussions will focus on recent books by the influential academics Houston A. Baker Jr, and Richard Iton – both of whom will be in attendance – as well as on works by Harold Cruse, bell hooks and Cornell West.

The conference will conclude Saturday, March 28, with a series of informal readings beginning at 5 p.m. in the Ethiopian restaurant Queen of Sheba, 6665 Olive Blvd.

All events are free and open to the public and – other than the concluding readings – take place on Washington University's Danforth Campus. For more information, contact Anton DiSciafani, lecturer in the Department of English, at [adisclaf@artsci.wustl.edu](mailto:adisclaf@artsci.wustl.edu) or (314) 935-5047.

For a complete schedule, visit [http://callaloo.tamu.edu/events\\_StL\\_schedule.htm](http://callaloo.tamu.edu/events_StL_schedule.htm)

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, March 25th

8 p.m., Whitaker Auditorium

Keynote address: Michael Eric Dyson, Georgetown University

Welcome: Vincent Sherry, Washington University in St. Louis,

John Baugh, Washington University in St. Louis

Introductions: Charles H. Rowell, Texas A&M University and editor, Callaloo;

Salamishah Tillet, University of Pennsylvania

Thursday, March 26

10 a.m., Hurst Lounge

Panel discussion: "On Harold Cruse's The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual"

Panelists: Carole Boyce Davies, Cornell University; Fred Moten, Duke University;

and Francesca Royster, DePaul University of Chicago

Moderator: Garrett Duncan, Washington University in St. Louis

MC: Adrienne Davis, Washington University in St. Louis

2 p.m., Hurst Lounge

Panel Discussion: "On Betrayal: How Black Intellectuals Have Abandoned

the Ideals of the Civil Rights Era"

Featuring: Houston A. Baker Jr, Vanderbilt University

Moderated by: Joseph Skerrett, University of Massachusetts

8 p.m., Whitaker Auditorium

Reading: Poet Rita Dove, University of Virginia

MC: Carl Phillips, Washington University in St. Louis

Friday, March 27

10 a.m., Hurst Lounge

Panel discussion: "On Breaking Bread, by bell hooks and Cornell West

Panelists: Suzette Spencer, University of Wisconsin; Thomas Glave, MIT

Respondents: Fred D'Aguiar, Virginia Tech University; Koritha Mitchell,

The Ohio State University; and Ivy Wilson, Northwestern University

Moderator: Joe Thompson, Washington University in St. Louis

MC: Amina Gautier, Washington University in St. Louis

2 p.m., Hurst Lounge

Presentation: "On In Search of the Black Fantastic: Politics and Popular

Culture in the Post-Civil Rights Era"

Featuring: Richard Iton, University of Toronto

Moderated by: Michelle Wright, University of Minnesota

MC: J. Dillon Brown, Washington University in St. Louis