Peak Performers in the ARTS

Anthony J Hamilton
News Editor

SEAN STOTO/KNIGHT LIFE

Junior Bryton Perry has been rapping since he was just a tyke.

"My brother [Loy Norrix Alumni Cedric Perry] got me into it," said Perry. "My first performance was in 2002, rapping at my church."

Now six years later Perry has discovered talents within himself that he never knew existed.

"I rap, write poetry, sing, dance, act, and produce music. Singing is a new one for me, and I just started doing it" said Perry.

Perry has been a competitor in the Kalamazoo branch of the NAACP's Act-So competition for the past 2 years. This year Perry earned a bronze medal in the area of Poetry.

"I like doing Act-So every year because it allows me the chance to express myself through my poems," said Perry.

In addition to participating in Act-So last summer, Perry placed fourth in the United Teen Talent show under the direction of Ben Zylman.

"The United teen talent show is really fun, and again you make lots of friends. Everyone is positive and supportive of each other…and you get paid!" Perry expressed.

"I plan to go to college for music engineering," says Perry. "Eventually I plan to produce music for myself and other artists."

Last year Cristina Flocea arrived in Kalamazoo from Moldova. She will be returning this May to pursue her college degree.

"I'm going back in May," said Flocea. "I'll just go to college there, I might come back as a college student later on."

Flocea says that since coming to America she realizes how heavily our culture is influenced by art.

"There's definitely more technology here, and the arts…just having arts is a big deal. Kids are more involved in the arts. We only have general education courses at my school in Moldova," said Flocea. "It's not that popular to be an artist over there. They focus more on jobs that will pay them well," Flocea adds.

Flocea's mother, who is an artist has been a big influence in her artistic endeavors.

"She was a teacher for me. I started when I was around ten or eleven," said Flocea.

Her biggest influences are her mother, and an artist named Igor Vieru.

"He's more concentrated on landscape," said Flocea, who adds that her painting style is a lot like his. He specializes in shadows and lights as she does.

"I like to paint what I see and try to be as realistic as possible," Flocea said.

In the future Flocea sees art as an extra curricular activity.

"I'll keep it as a hobby," she said.

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Junior Elexis Buchanan began painting last year, which prompted her to take Ms. Lyons' painting class this year. Buchanan specializes in painting, sketching, and stained glass.

"I wanna go into art in college," said Buchanan. "I'm looking at Washington State in St. Louis, and Western." She added.

When speaking of her influences Buchanan has at the top of her list middle school art teacher Miss Crittenden.

"I like how Ms. Crittenden does realistic artwork. She does stuff that reflects her," said Buchanan.

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Another big influence of Buchanan's is Loy Norrix art teacher, Nancy Mollhagen.

"She's different," said Buchanan. "She uses a lot of colors but they always come together."

The week of April 28th, Buchanan's work was displayed at the Secondary Art Show, here in Kalamazoo. Buchanan was very excited about this. She hopes to continue art throughout her senior year.

"Road to Riches": Kalamazoo Rap Group Reaches for the Stars

Jacquese Steele
Staff Writer

PHOTO COURTESY OF MYSPACE.COM
Deshawn O'Large in his promo photo for his rap group "Brighter Side of Darkness."

Loy Norrix Junior Deshawn (D-Boy) O'Large has recently released a rap/hip hop album titled "Road to Riches" with his group "Brighter Side of Darkness" (B.S.O.D), consisting of members Detron Hawkins (Tron-G), Jarmell Gilmer (Mel G), and Chris Thomas (Legend). This all star group is pretty darn good and are on their way to bigger and better places.

"Road to Riches," according to O'Large took 24 weeks to record. The young men of B.S.O.D wrote all of their own lyrics and composed their own melodies. These boys bring something else to the rap/hip hop game. Their songs are about life struggles, the realization of past mistakes and trudging forward. While expressing all of this, not a single curse word is ever used. This is something that is not very common in today's rap music.

"Road to Riches" was entirely produced by Mike Anderson and was recorded and mastered in 3-hour sessions at the juvenile home on Gull Road.

"You can't just go and record something, you have to make sure that it's the right material," said O'Large.

O'Large speaks on how important it is to put your best foot forward in the recording studio. He believes that he should give his listeners the best album possible. O'Large also speaks on experiences in the studio with manager Paul Williams who has kept the boys of B.S.O.D grounded and has personally helped O'Large to stay driven. O'Large says that if Williams felt something was not right or felt something had the potential to be better he would speak on it.

"I would keep trying and trying until finally I would come up with something he really liked," said O'Large.

O'Large also expressed that it is not easy to record an album with a group since there are different personalities and creative perspectives going into the project. O'Large said that the boys had trouble working together at times because everyone wanted to shine and be the star. He also said that there was trouble with deciding who would be featured on certain songs, and in what particular order. But these boys didn't let that hold them back and the gigs that they have obtained proves it.

B.S.O.D opened up a concert for the notorious rapper "Cassidy" at the Grand Rapids Bacon Theatre back in march. The group was very honored to have done this performance since Cassidy has been an inspiration to them all, and especially O'Large who would love to work with the rapper one day.

"He's the best rapper alive!" said O'Large.

"Road to Riches" has 10 head bobbing tracks. One of these 10 tracks, "I Know You the One" is a solo done by O'Large.

"It's my favorite song. It expressed more of my feelings as opposed to the other songs where I told it like it was," said O'Large.

"I Know You the One," talks about a young lady who is very special to O'Large and is someone that he will never forget.

"She's the first one I've ever felt strongly about," O'Large said, revealing his softer side.

If you are wondering where you can get a copy of "Road to Riches" you can see O'Large or pick one up from the juvenile home on Gull Road.

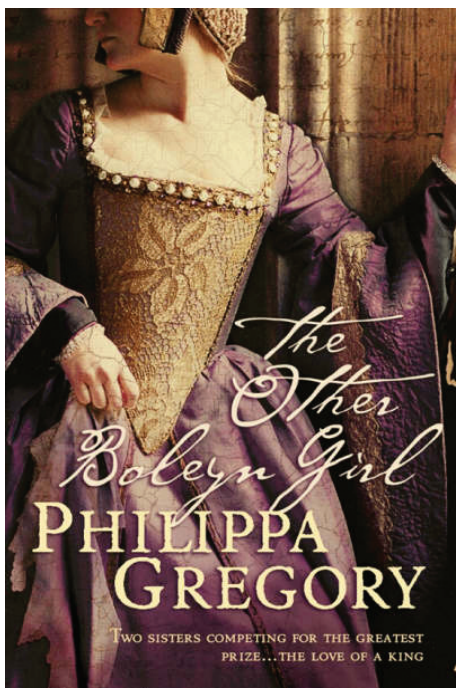
The boys of B.S.O.D's future plans are to work on their own projects. O'Large is currently working on a solo album. The potential name for this album is "Street Life." The concept of this album will be relationships. O'Large hopes to feature R&B singers on this album in order to give it a smoother sound. He is working really hard on this album and plans to take his talents and skills to the next level.

Ultimately O'Large wants to be signed to Columbia Records and plans to keep striving to reach this goal.

If you ask O'Large why he wants to be in the rap game he'll simply say, "For the love of the music."

"The Other Boleyn Girl"

Katelynn Lucas
Copy Editor



Mary Boleyn loves King Henry VIII. In fact she is head over heels in love with the man. Her sister, Anne claims she is behaving foolishly, but Mary knows she has found true love. That is, until Anne captures the King's attention.

If the story seems familiar, it is because in March the motion picture "The Other Boleyn Girl" staring Natalie Portman (Anne Boleyn), Eric Bana (King Henry VIII), and Scarlett Johansson (Mary Boleyn-Carey) was released. What you might not realize is that the movie is based on a historical romance novel written by Philippa Gregory of the same title.

"The Other Boleyn Girl" is an incredibly interesting story full of love, deceit and ambition, one that is perfect for the lazy days of summer vacation. At nearly 700 pages, the novel might seem a bit overwhelming, but it is easy to get lost in.

Gregory begins "The Other Boleyn Girl" with the narrator, Mary Boleyn-Carey, witnessing the beheading of the Duke of Buckinghamshire in 1521. Seeing the story through Mary's eyes provides a unique perspective on the plot because she faces the most challenges throughout the plot. Watching the events unfold through the eyes of the most developed and historically accurate characters allows the reader to get inside of Mary's mind, which makes the story believeable.

The setting, which originally moves from 1521 to 1522, skips inconsistently through the rest of the novel, varying from year to year then season to season and might confuse the reader. However, after the first few jumps through time, the reader should be able to catch on quickly.

When the time frame moves to 1522, Mary Boleyn is asked to entertain the King in any way possible, be it through simple conversations, dancing, or being his lover, in order to bring the Boleyn family good fortune. The reader is left wondering how it is that the Boleyn family decides Mary is the right sister to entertain the King especially since she is married. It is after Henry VIII gives his affections to Mary that the romance and lust begin to shine in every page. Right away Mary worries about losing her good graces in court, as she and Henry VIII both have spouses. However, Mary falls madly in love with Henry VIII almost from day one despite her worries.

Henry becomes Mary's one true love; despite the fact that she claims to love her own husband, William Carey. Anne Boleyn tries to tell Mary that she is behaving completely ridiculously following Mary's second pregnancy when she longs for nothing but to be with her children at Hever Castle, where she grew up.

Mary continues to fear that Henry's wife, Queen Katherine of England, will no longer favor her in court after Mary gives birth to two of the King's children. The Queen never loses favor for Mary until her sister, Anne convinces Henry VIII to divorce Queen Katherine in order to marry her [Anne].

It is during Mary's second pregnancy that Anne's role becomes clear. Intending to keep the Boleyn name in the King's mind, Anne flirts with Henry VIII, a flirtation that quickly leads to Henry's obsession and determination to take Anne as his lover while Mary lays awaiting child. But Anne, the more stubborn of the two Boleyn sisters and proving to be quite the nuisance, refuses to acknowledge his intentions. She wants nothing to do with the King while Queen Katherine is still in power because she desires to be Queen of England herself.

"The Other Boleyn Girl" proves to be quite the interesting and intriguing read, with plot twists around every corner. Readers will quickly find themselves disliking several of the characters for their lies, yet at the same time they will enjoy the ever-changing story of love, lust, and ambition illustrated by Gregory.