

Forever loyal to Wu-Tang Clan

BY RICHARD GIRALDI January 9, 2011 6:46PM

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Seventeen years have passed since Wu-Tang Clan released its highly influential debut, "Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)." Since then, the members of the legendary ninja-rapping outfit have released a slew of solo releases, battled breakup rumors and even seen the death of original member Ol' Dirty Bastard in 2004. Still, the group's fan base is so sturdy that regardless if the group is together or not, Wu-Tang Clan remains prominent in mainstream hip-hop.

It was this fan dedication that brought a surge of energy to Wu-Tang Clan's sold-out Saturday night performance at the Congress Theater. It didn't seem to matter that



the current tour edition of Wu-Tang is hardly the original. RZA announced before the tour began that he had prior commitments, and as Method Man informed the audience, Raekwon had a family emergency and couldn't make the show, either.

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Once GZA, Method Man, Ghostface Killah, Inspectah Deck, U-God and Masta Killa hit the stage, and the DJ blasted the opening bass-and-snare hits from "Bring Da Ruckus," all bets were off. The church of Wu-Tang was now in session as Ghostface Killah launched into the song's first verse with the crowd repeating every line in unison with hands high in the air. And while most rock acts use fog machines, the Wu-Tang's crowd provided its own veil of thick gray smoke.

The fans' enthusiasm seemed to bring out the best in the Method Man. While Ghostface Killa and Inspectah Deck simply paced back and forth, Method Man bounced around the stage with abandon and even took a stage dive into the front few rows.

The group, for the most part, stuck with its most familiar material. There were quite a few selections from "Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)," including "C.R.E.A.M.," which the crowd helped out on during the first verse that belonged to the absent Raekwon. But the set occasionally delved into solo material from the individual members, including "Liquid Swords" from the 1995 GZA album of the same name. Yet one of the most endearing moments of the show came during a dedication to ODB, when the group brought out his son, YDB Boy Jones, to perform his father's plucky piano classic "Shimmy Shimmy Ya."

One aspect of the show that didn't really sit well with the crowd was when Wu-Tang said its goodnights and left the stage after performing only a little more than an hour. Still, the sweet but short set proved that Wu-Tang Clan is still a relevant and



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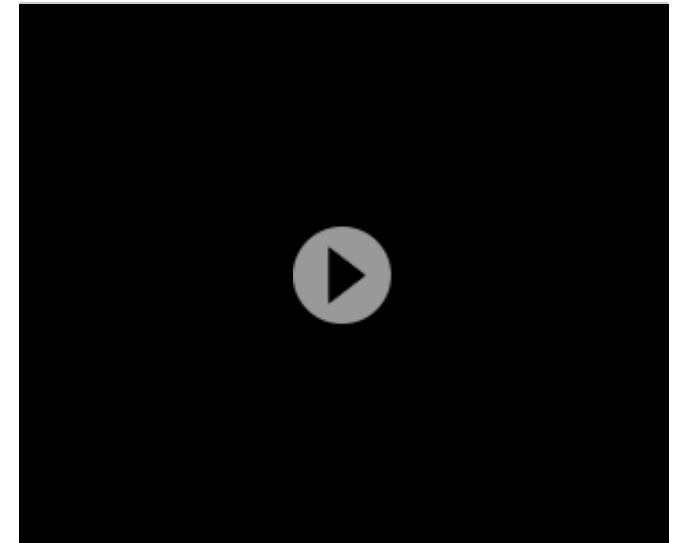




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