Ki Ki Brown

Ki Ki Brown is Pittsburgh's 'voice of the city'

By Rob Taylor Jr.

For the Courier

Ki Ki Brown had her first on-air job at WAMO in the early '90s. She later went on to the mid-to-late '90s, when WAMO was at 105.9 FM, and later 107.3 The Beat. She also told the Courier that she left the Beat in 2014.

Ki Ki Brown was named as one of the 50 Cent's favorite DJs by the rapper himself.

Ki Ki Brown was also known for her signature "Ki Ki's Classifieds" segment on-air.

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From the moment your favorite music artist announces their tour, you check to see if one of the tour dates is in Pittsburgh. Yes, Pittsburgh it is. December 8, PPG Paints Arena. Or, you hear that one of the hottest new rappers in hip-hop is coming to the 'Burgh. October 30. At a new venue on Banksville Road. You instantly start planning for it. You purchase your tickets. You figure out what exclusive outfit you’ll be wearing. And then you wake up, and realize, it was all a dream.

COVID has put those large-scale, in-person events like concerts and big club nights on a very extended hold. Local hip-hop artists in Pittsburgh haven’t had the chance to perform in front of packed crowds since the coronavirus pandemic began in mid-March. But hopefully one day, this pandemic will all be over, and club nights and concerts can return. Hip-hop artists in Pittsburgh will be back to rocking shows.

Portia Foxx is the mid-day host on WAMO 100.1 FM. Before she ever was on WAMO, she hosted a local podcast and had intimate knowledge of Pittsburgh’s hip-hop scene. The well-respected radio host decided to take things one step further, when she presented to Pittsburgh an “Inside The Industry” music seminar at the Energy Innovation Center, on Bedford Avenue in the Hill District, to help local artists get to the next level. After all, all local artists want to, one day, become international superstars.

Portia Foxx told the New Pittsburgh Courier that attendees of the March seminar learned the business of getting attorneys, copyrights, “everything they probably needed to know but maybe not in a position to get it or afford it,” she said. Some of the panelists included Loody Boy, rapper Wiz Khalifa’s music label; DJ Ryan Wolf, from Cleveland hip-hop station “Z 107.9” and the Cleveland Browns’ official DJ; “GQ;” and Ki Ki Brown, afternoon host at Pittsburgh’s urban adult contemporary station “107.3 The Beat.”

Portia Foxx, DJ Ryan Wolf, “Z 107.9” in Cleveland

DJ J-DOUGH, a DJ on Cincinnati radio station “101.1 The Wiz,” speaks to attendees at the “Inside The Industry” music seminar, held in March in the Hill District. Nigel McDaniels looks on. (Photos by Courier photographer Dayna Delgado)
Sophie Okonedo successfully tackles mental illness in Netflix’s ‘Ratched’

Typically when Netflix audiences flock to social media with recommendations, I am skeptical, if not apprehensive, to tune in. But the memes and Facebook statuses almost twisted my arm into watching Netflix’s newest series, “Ratched.”

After all the posts I stumbled across, I was interested in one particular person, Sophie Okonedo. The 52-year-old actress plays a patient, Charlotte Wells, who is suffering from multiple personality disorder. Based on Nurse Ratched in Ken Kesey’s novel “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest,” “Ratched” follows a wacked-out nurse (Sarah Paulson) who terrorizes a California psychiatric hospital in hopes to set her serial-killer brother free.

The Netflix show also stars Finn Wittrock, Sharon Stone, Cynthia Nixon and Judy Davis. This eight-part adaption, which is set in 1947, is oddly wonderful. The familiar faces of American Horror Story, gruesome storylines, and quirky punchlines are a wonderful potion to great TV. But Sophie Okonedo steals the show with her raw talent, which saves the entire series for me because when “Ratched” gets slow she picks it up. When “Ratched” gets redundant and starts to look like every other season of American Horror Story, Okonedo pulls up.”

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