



CITY OF COMPTON

City of Compton
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Thousands Turn Out to See Native Son Kendrick Lamar Receive Key to City

*Two-Time Grammy Winner Says As Long As He's Making Music
He'll Always Scream Compton*

COMPTON— In front of the Compton's Martin Luther King Jr. monument adjacent to City Hall thousands turned out Saturday to see two-time Grammy winner and Compton native Kendrick Lamar receive the Key to the City from Mayor Aja Brown and the City Council. The hometown honor comes ahead of the Monday's Grammy ceremony where Lamar is nominated for eleven Grammys for his latest album, "To Pimp a Butterfly."

"Kendrick Lamar is a phenomenal artist whose work has served as a catalyst to raise a new level of consciousness for this generation," said Compton Mayor Aja Brown. "His message challenges the status quo and motivates listeners to rethink our society's institutions. He has a consciousness, and he realizes music is not just for entertainment but it's for messaging."

Speaking on receiving the Key to the City Lamar said, "It's the biggest thing. It's really not about how famous I get, it's really about me utilizing my platform and giving it back to these kids because that's what I wanted as a kid. Everything that I do is a reflection of how I felt when I was younger."

Lamar still spends much of his time in Compton, contributing to schools and programs to help the community.

Saturday's performances included Lamar's alma maters Vanguard Middle School and Centennial High School doing versions of his most popular songs. There was also a special

tribute by the Divas of Compton to one-year-old Autumn Johnson who lost her life to gang violence this week.

Notables in attendance at the event included fellow rapper and Compton native YG, hip-hop radio personalities Big Boy (The Real 92.3) and J Cruz (Power 106).

Compton Councilmembers Janna Zurita, Isaac Galvan, Tana L. McCoy and Emma Sharif all echoed the Mayor's praise of Lamar's music and commitment to the City of Compton in their remarks. Congresswoman Janice Hahn, Senator Isadore Hall and Assemblymembers Mike Gipson and Sebastian Ridley-Thomas also gave tributes to the 28-year-old who recently had the honor of having President Barack Obama proclaim Lamar's "How Much a Dollar Cost" as his favorite song of 2015.

Lamar, 28, received a total of seven nominations at the 2014 Grammy Awards, including Album of the Year. A year later, at the 2015 Grammy Awards, he won Best Rap Song and Best Rap Performance for his song "I". Last May, Lamar received the California State Senate's "Generational Icon Award" from State Senator Isadore Hall III (D-Compton) who represents Compton. From the senate floor, Lamar told the legislature, "Being from the City of Compton and knowing the parks that I played at and the neighborhoods, I always thought how great the opportunity would be to give back to my community off of what I do in music."

"To Pimp a Butterfly was" named by music magazines Rolling Stone and Spin the best album of 2015. Complex ranked Lamar atop its "The 20 Best Rappers in Their 20s" annual list.

Lamar was born in Compton to parents from Chicago, Illinois. His birth name was given to him by his mother in honor of singer Eddie Kendricks. In 1995, at the age of eight, Lamar witnessed his idols, Tupac Shakur and Dr. Dre, film the music video for their hit single "California Love", which later proved to be a very significant moment in Lamar's life. As a teenager, Lamar attended Centennial High School in Compton, where he was a straight-A student.

He served as the 63rd Grand Marshal of the Compton Christmas Parade last year.

Kendrick Lamar ended his acceptance speech by saying, "As long as I'm doing music, as long as I'm using my platform for something I'm a always—since day one—scream Compton and make sure I come back to this community and do right by it because y'all always done right by me."

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