

Rap Promoter Murdered

Written by Keith ID583

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Rap artist Noriega and Fat Joe were at the hospital bedside of a Jersey City man murdered outside a Tonnelle Avenue bar yesterday.

At 2:15 a.m. yesterday, rap promoter Robert "Tito" Montanez, 31, of, Jersey City, was with rapper Capone when he was shot twice in the chest in the parking lot of a bar at Tonnelle and Manhattan avenues, officials said.

Officials said the dispute began over an item of jewelry.

Hudson County Prosecutor Edward DeFazio said. police had to disperse an unruly crowd of about 100 people in the parking lot before an ambulance could get to Montanez and take him to the Jersey City Medical Center and into emergency surgery.

Montanez was revived numerous times on the way to the hospital and he was in intensive care when his heart stopped twice more and doctors said there was nothing they could do, family members said. He was pronounced dead just after 6 a.m. yesterday, Hudson County Prosecutor DeFazio said.

A second victim, Shea Harvey, 30, of New York City, ran for his life when the gunfire broke out and was shot in the leg from behind, DeFazio said, adding that he was taken to the medical center, treated and released.

Montanez had three small children and worked promoting several rap and hip-hop acts family members said. He was also road manager for rapper AKON, who was at the Ringside Bar the night he was killed. Montanez was CEO of the Block Records label, which had acts including Fury, KAI and Crook, family members said.

Robert Montanez's brother Louis was with him at the Ringside where they were videotaping Capone in the bar for a promotion.

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He said that later, in the parking lot, he watched as "three guys came and bumped into them and the guy was about to take Capone's necklace and he stepped in," Louis Montanez said of his brother.

"The guy pulled out a gun and shot him twice," Montanez said through tears last night. "He fell and he was unconscious, foaming from the mouth and his eyes were rolling back. I knew it was a bad deal because that gun was so loud. As soon as he was hit, he was down."

DeFazio confirmed that a confrontation over an item of jewelry apparently led to the shooting, but said no definite motive for the shooting had been determined. Robert Montanez's body has been taken to the Regional Medical Examiner's Office in Newark for an autopsy, DeFazio said.

The prosecutor said that numerous shots were fired and the shells have been recovered by investigators. DeFazio also said that the gun was not recovered and that there was no indication that anyone but the shooter was armed.

While Robert Montanez fought for his life at the medical center yesterday, numerous people turned up to show solidarity, including rappers Noriega and Fat Joe. Costa said Montanez was also a friend of former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson's and had recently attended a rap awards ceremony with the boxer.

Robert Montanez was born in Brooklyn but lived in Jersey City for the past two decades. He graduated from Dickinson High School, Jersey City.

Investigators ask that anyone with information about the shooting call the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office's homicide squad at (201) 915-1345.