

Da Brat's Birthday Bash Marred By Brawl

Written by Robert ID1147

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Rap and hip-hop star Da Brat came home to Chicago to celebrate her birthday with a VIP party and concert for fans.

But the sold-out show at the Harold Washington Cultural Center was marred by a brawl in the lobby, after fans denied entry began fighting with security guards.

By the time the melee ended, four men were arrested, each charged with battery.

Claude Johnson, 29; William Huntley, 20; Welsh Blake, 22, and Tristan Spurlin, 22, all of Chicago, were accused of causing the fight at the year-old center at 4701 King Dr. around 1:40 a.m. Saturday.

Chicago Police said the ticketed show was sold out and that those arriving late were told to stay out. The four responded by pushing security guards until they were inside the building's lobby.

Spurlin, police said, was carrying a handgun and hit one of the security guards on the back of the head with it, trying to get away and into the show. Spurlin was also charged with unlawful use of a weapon and possession of ammunition.

The beautiful female rap artist came home to celebrate. The event was promoted as an all-night affair to celebrate the 31st birthday of the rap hip-hop diva born Shawntee Harris.

Da Brat, who most recently starred on VH1's "The Surreal Life," came to prominence in the mid-1990s with hits like "Funkdafied," and followed in 2000 and 2001 with "That's What I'm Looking For" and "What 'Chu Like," respectively. She has collaborated with some of the biggest names in pop music, including Mariah Carey and Missy Elliott.

The rapper had a VIP bash at Pressure Point Studios, 2239 S. Michigan Ave., starting at 9 p.m.,

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and her show at the cultural center lasted until 3 a.m.

The \$19.5 million Harold Washington Cultural Center was opened last year amid much fanfare and has provided a cornerstone for a revitalization effort in the Bronzeville neighborhood.

Its executive director, Jimalita Tillman, is the daughter of Ald. Dorothy Tillman (3rd), who pushed for its construction.

Center officials could not be reached for comment Sunday, nor could concert promoters, while those sponsoring the VIP bash said they weren't affiliated with the concert and knew nothing of the fight at that show.

[Source](#)