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CHAPPELLE: "This is a hard question to answer..."

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Chappelle: What's funny about it is my son, my youngest son, is as old now as I was when I started (at 14), and looking at him makes me understand how crazy that was to start at that age, even though at the time it felt very natural. ... People general like me — they're always going to be people that don't like me — but it doesn't matter, enough people like me that I can make a living this way. After I left my television show, I didn't know that I would ever, I didn't think anything, that was a real tough lump I took. I can't explain to people what the emotional content of those decisions were like.

And what's beautiful about it is, a guy will go through something sometimes in show business and the people will get away from him. Certain people, especially people like Ahmir (Questlove) and The Roots and all these other guys, they're always still included and it was always a little more familiar, and it meant a lot to me. Even a guy like Usher, I remember Usher one time, I was at a bar and he brought me out to a birthday party another celebrity was having; it was just



FILE — This Sunday, July 6, 2014 file photo, Dave Chappelle performs at the Essence Festival in New Orleans. As Dave Chappelle reflects on spending 30 years in comedy, he says he's grateful and humble to still be living his dreams onstage. The 43-year-old kicked off a residency this week, Saturday, Aug. 5, 2017, at Radio City Music Hall in New York. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert, File)

nice to be included without having to be hot. It was just warm.

These types of memories I'm grateful for and I'm old enough to understand to be grateful for (it). I don't take any of this (stuff) for granted, none of it. So there's a lot of, being a public person, that I personally find terrifying, and I don't really get locked into an existence of being

hot or not, but night's like tonight, it's a breath of fresh air. Just to see that everyone's OK; Jay-Z's making a record and he's damn near 50 and it's relevant. And we're all working.

AP: *I haven't been to a show before where they've locked up your phone.*

Chappelle: There's no

phones or anything. If there were phones and people were posting stuff, you could get likes and maybe get followers, but if no one has a phone, that's how you become a legend. ... Comedy relies on the element of surprise and any part of a show taken out of the context of the show could sound — well it all sounds crazy anyway — it would sound way cra-

zier. And it empowers me to be more courageous with the audience ... which is all I'm really concerned with 'cause they came out.

AP: *The world is very sensitive right now, and I'm wondering if you take that into consideration when you're writing jokes. Are you altering jokes to satisfy people?*

Chappelle: This is a hard question to answer. No, it doesn't alter it. I feel like our ears are calibrated a certain way for a reason right now, and different people are sensitive to different things. I think the only way we got a shot at being cohesive and hearing each other is if we speak more freely. And I feel like there are things happening in culture that are making the audience a more discerning audience out of necessity. Mainly the fact that we're so bombarded with so much information that we have to be more sophisticated to sift through it all. If you have presidents just dismissing things like, 'That's just fake news' — Jesus Christ, it's really serious out here. So people have to learn how to critically think and they also have to learn how to objectively listen, and that's hard. And then there's these phrases they got now, what do they call it? Identity politics. But (stuff) is what it is. And the core of it from my perspective is everybody's trying to be happy and feel good and get through what seems to be an increasingly difficult life. Not

difficult like we're lifting heavy things, we don't lift heavy (stuff), we don't do that anymore, but all our heavy lifting is psychological, emotional, and there are some things that are happening that I look at as encouraging that the conversation will elevate. We'll become a more soulful nation.

AP: *You don't do lots of interviews, so what is it that you want to say to people out there?*

Chappelle: I always get nervous addressing people outside the context of jokes, but I do feel grateful. Not just because people come out (to see my shows), but there's a certain way people engage with me, it makes me feel like there's an acknowledgment that I'm a person. And they don't expect me to be perfect, which is a relief because I am not. It's a real valuable relationship ... and I know everything I say is not for everybody. When I'm right, I'm right, and when I'm wrong, forgive me. And again, it's not church — if you want to hear somebody be right all the time go to church, if you want to laugh at (stuff) that terrifies you, go to a comedy club. And that's how I feel.

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Rap Mogul Suge Knight Accused of Threatening Film Director

by: Michael Balsamo
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Former rap mogul Marion "Suge" Knight pleaded not guilty Thursday to allegations that he threatened to kill or seriously injure the director of the film "Straight Outta Compton."

The Death Row Records co-founder appeared in court in Los Angeles after being indicted on criminal threat charges stemming from an August 2014 incident when Knight allegedly threatened the film's director, F. Gary Gray.

The 2015 biopic focused on the rise and fall of the hip hop group N.W.A. and Knight is depicted in the film as an influential figure in the rap movement in Compton in the late '80s and '90s. One of the group's members, Dr. Dre, left N.W.A. after he hired Knight as his manager.

The two later founded Death Row Records, which fueled gangster rap's popularity in the 1990s and its roster included Dr. Dre, Tupac Shakur and Snoop Dogg. Knight lost control of the company after it was forced into bankruptcy. Knight's attorney,



This combination photo shows director F. Gary Gray at "The Fate of the Furious" in New York on April 8, 2017, left, and Death Row Records co-founder Marion Hugh "Suge" Knight in a Los Angeles courtroom on July 7, 2015. " Knight pleaded not guilty Thursday, Aug. 3, 2017, to allegations that he threatened to kill or seriously injure Gray, who directed the film "Straight Outta Compton." (AP Photos/File)

Matthew Fletcher, told reporters that his client had been in negotiations with Gray and was seeking compensation for the use of his likeness in the film.

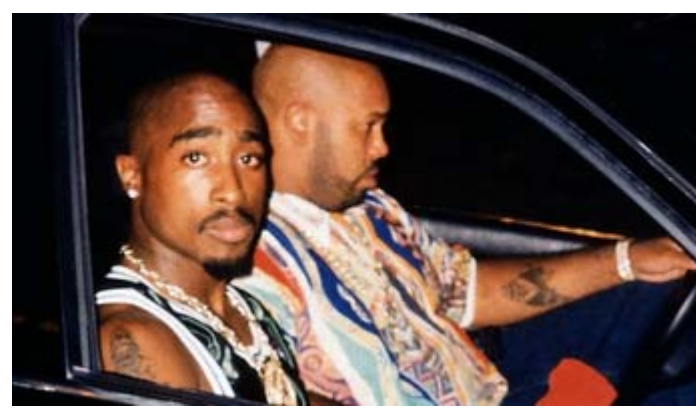
The indictment against Knight alleges he made specific threats against Gray that conveyed "an immediate prospect of execution," leading Gray to fear for his life and the safety of his family. Fletcher said Knight denies threatening Gray.

"There is certainly no evidence he sent any texts threatening him," the defense attorney said.

Knight remains jailed and is awaiting trial on an unrelated murder charge filed after a 2015 incident in which he ran over two men outside a Compton burger stand, killing one. His lawyers have said he



This combination photo shows director F. Gary Gray at "The Fate of the Furious" in New York on April 8, 2017, left, and Death Row Records co-founder Marion Hugh "Suge" Knight in a Los Angeles courtroom on July 7, 2015. " Knight pleaded not guilty Thursday, Aug. 3, 2017, to allegations that he threatened to kill or seriously injure Gray, who directed the film "Straight Outta Compton." (AP Photos/File)



Tupac Shakur, sitting in the passenger side of Suge Knight's car, is shot three times with one bullet striking his hip, another bullet striking his right hand, with the third shot causing a fatal wound to his chest.

was fleeing armed attackers when he struck the men.

Knight, 52, was ordered held on \$1 million bail, said Ricardo Santiago, a spokesman for the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office. He is due back in court next week.

Knight pleaded no

contest in 1995 and was sentenced to five years' probation for assaulting two rappers in 1992. He was sentenced to prison in 1997 for violating his probation by taking part in a fight at a Las Vegas hotel hours before Shakur was fatally wounded in a drive-by shooting as he rode in Knight's car.



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