

# Savior for Some and Hero for Many

## The Office of Africana Studies hosts James Smalls

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Much research has been about the civil rights movement and Malcolm X's life. On Wednesday November 16, 2011, the Office of Africana Studies at Kean University hosted their 25th anniversary celebration of African Studies by having guest speaker James Smalls lecture students about the controversy concerning Manning Marable.



Smalls was born in 1945 in a small Arcadia plantation, near Georgetown, South Carolina. After graduating high school he immediately entered the U.S. navy. He served the navy for approximately two years. In 1963, Smalls visited the Big Apple -- where Malcolm X frequently spoke. "When I first came to New York" explained Smalls "I saw the most beautiful man, speaking his mind." Not too long after he joined Malcolm X's organization of Afro-American Unity. Smalls soon served as principal bodyguard to late Ella L. Collins, the sister of Malcolm X, for the next eleven years.

During the lecture located in the Kean University Little Theater, Smalls questioned Marable about his research. Marable's 592 page book explored Malcolm X's life as well as his death. Marable points out certain individuals whom he alleges planned to kill Malcolm X. Throughout the book Marable also states that the man who fired the first shot is still alive. "I knew Malcolm X" stated Smalls "I sat in his table and ate his own food." Smalls continued to explain that in the book "Malcolm X: A Life Reinvented, A Response" was not researched well. "Malcolm was not a mythical character like others presumed; he was dynamic and that is how he knew he was going to get killed -- he trained the killers," states Smalls.

Smalls ended the lecture expressing his thoughts and beliefs concerning the book as well as Malcolm X. "Malcolm X is my lord and savior," Smalls states "Everyone has a lord and savior and I have one too; He

died in order for me to have a life."

Smalls has lectured throughout the country as well as outside of the country such as University of Manchester, Manchester England. University of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas, VI, University of the West Indies Porte-Spain, Trinidad; University of West Indies; Kingston Jamaica, Princeton University Princeton, NJ, Harvard University Boston, MA, Yale University, New Haven, CT., Columbia University and New York University of New York, NY.