

Astro IS THE NEW KANYE WEST

By Stefanie Cohen

THE BROOKLYN-BORN MC WITH SWAGGER AND SAUCE HAS THE MIC, AND HE AIN'T LETTIN' IT GO

In the great tradition of Mr. Imaleyoufinish, young MC Brian Bradley, aka Astro, made his mark at his first *X Factor* audition by shooting his mouth off.

"What is your problem, son?" the precocious 15-year-old asked executive producer Simon Cowell as the judge watched in shock. "You lucky we ain't in the streets," he continued. "Cuz if we was in the streets, this is what I'd say to you..."

Then he launched into his single, "Stop Looking at My Mom"—and proceeded to bring down the house.

The ever-unflappable Cowell responded, "You are arrogant, obnoxious and argumentative, but one of the most talented young people I've heard in a long, long time."

At press time, the 10th-grader from Brownsville was still wowing audiences with his rhymes, riffing off Eminem's "Lose Yourself" and doing right by his mentor, legendary producer LA Reid.

"I used to run this label called Def Jam, and all those years I was there, I was looking for you, but you never walked in," said a bowled-over Reid after one performance.

Like Kanye, Astro is not one for modesty. He told *X Factor* host Steve Jones that he considers the hip-hop heavyweight and his King of Rhymes pal Jay-Z to be his competition.

"If you give me about five years, I'll be better than Jay-Z," he said.

Devi Dev, co-host of Eminem's SiriusXM channel Shade 45, thinks the little dude may just have a shot: "Astro has the self-assuredness of Kanye, the energy and true-to-form craft of vets like Run DMC and the youth and marketability of a Bieber. Watching him on *X Factor* you might as well be looking into a hip-hop crystal ball."

Whether or not Astro scores the \$5 million and a recording contract, there's no stopping this shorty.

"When you know your talent, nobody can bring you down," he said. Spoken like a true mic hog.



Head2Head

ASTRO | KANYE WEST

Age: 15 | Age: 34
Height: 5'4" | Height: 5'9"

INFLUENCES

Biggie, 2 Pac, Jay-Z | Wu Tang Clan

BRAGGER SWAGGER

First he dissed Cowell, then Astro boasted to guest judge Rihanna that they "will be doing a collab one day." | Kanye famously claimed, "George Bush doesn't care about black people," and cut off Taylor Swift at the VMAs

JAY-Z CONNECTION

During an episode of *X Factor*, judge Paula Abdul said, "I know Jay-Z has his eye on you." | Produced Hova's *Blueprint* album; accompanied him on their *Watch the Throne* tour

TAGS

Astronomical Kid, CKO, Coolest Kid Out | Ye, Yeezy, The Louis Vuitton Don

SARTORIAL TASTE

Thick-framed glasses, baseball caps, headphones | Slitted shades, leather pants, denim on denim

Brian Bradley, aka Astro, is the New York breakout hit on *The X Factor*.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ALDO ROSSI/FOX; SHIRLAINE FORREST/GETTY IMAGES; FRANK MICELOTTA/FOX/PICTUREGROUP/AP