

# FEATURES

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Wednesday, January 16, 2002

## One eyed bandit on the loose

■ As part of his new tour, gangsta rap elder Slick Rick will perform at WOW Hall

By Marcus Hathcock  
Oregon Daily Emerald

An icon of '80s and '90s gangsta rap is coming to town tomorrow night with a few of his friends.

Richard Walters, known to the music world as "Slick Rick," will be busting rhymes Thursday evening at WOW Hall. The concert also includes the talents of Da' Limp Dic Posse featuring DJ Feniz, Boom Bap Project and host DJ Tekneek.

Flashy chains and a "pimpster" attitude are nothing new to Rick, who was the poster-boy for what would become the gangsta-rap movement of the 1990s. With his trademark eye patch and misogynistic lyrics, some may say Rick came before his time.

"He's one of those people who are respected as a hip-hop MC by the people who really know the music," said Dante, a Portland disk jockey with KXJM-FM.

Rick was born in London in 1965 to Jamaican parents. In 1979, Rick and his family relocated to the Bronx, where he attended the La Guardia High School of Music and Art. While attending this school, he met fellow rapper Dana Dane and formed the Kangol Crew.

After meeting Doug E. Freshin 1984, Rick joined the Get Fresh Crew as MC Ricky D. Their song "The Show" was widely popular in 1985, eventually leading to Rick's solo career.

In 1988, Rick's first solo album, "The Great Adventures of Slick Rick," was released. Although radio stations were uneasy about playing Rick's song "Treat Her like a Prostitute" on the air, other songs like "Mona Lisa" and "If I'm Not Your Lover" were broadcast.

"Compared to most of the hip-hop that's out there today, (Slick Rick's music) is pretty tame," WOW Hall publicist Bob Fennessy said.

Although there are misogynistic lyrics in some of Rick's music, Fennessy said the rapper justifies it by showing that the person being disrespected deserved it.

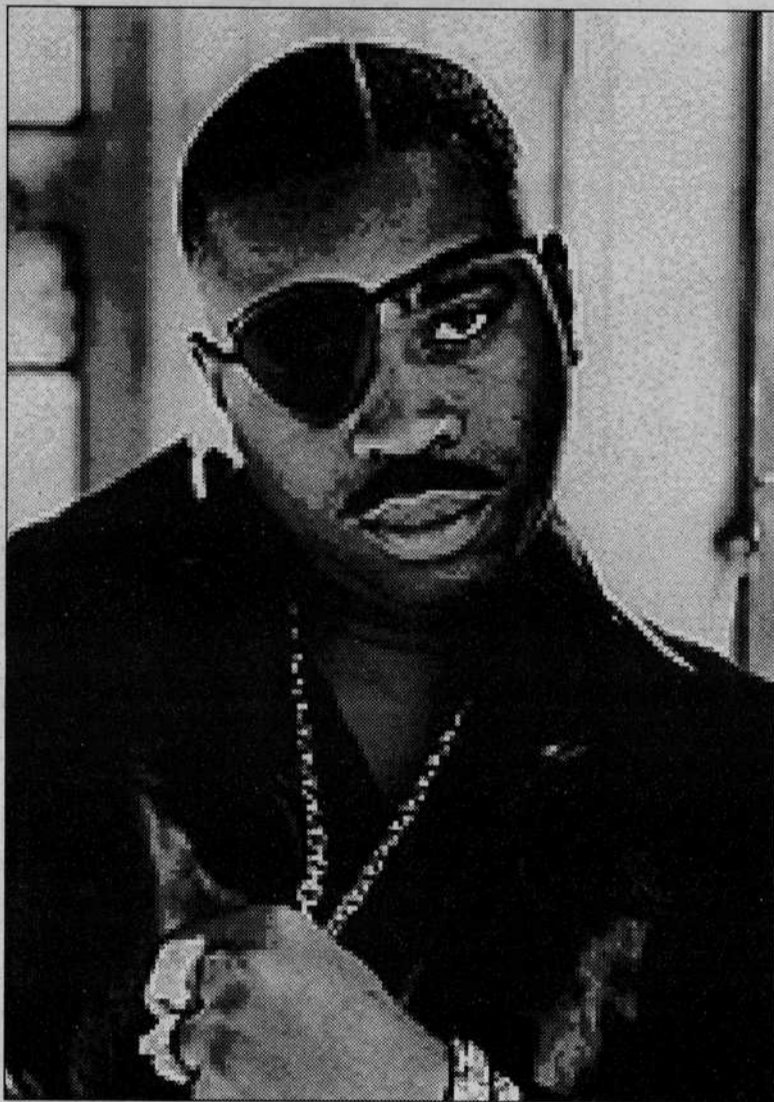
Fennessy said parents shouldn't worry about Rick's content — the show is open for all ages.

"Parents are buying these tickets for their kids," Fennessy said. "The language isn't all that strong, and the music is fairly mellow."

The show's promoter, Dan Steinberg, said he agrees that Slick Rick's concert won't be a big shock to younger audiences.

"There's nothing you're going to see at this show that you haven't seen if you watch TV past 9 (p.m.)," Steinberg said.

Tonight's concert is part of the "One Eyed Bandit Tour," in hopes of promoting Rick's 1999 album



Courtesy photo

"The Art of Storytelling." The tour will be a weave of old and new Slick Rick rhymes.

"It's going to be hot," Dante said. "The thought of Slick Rick coming to town makes me excited."

One of Rick's opening acts is the Boom Bap Project, a "new school" hip-hop group out of Seattle. Steinberg, a University senior business major, said he predicts success for this opening group.

"They're going to be the big hip-hop act that comes out of the Northwest — the one people will call their 'hometown' group," Steinberg said.

He said Boom Bap Project has already performed with modern hip-hop greats, such as The Pharcyde and Tha Alkaholiks.

"A lot of (music) industry heads ... are saying a lot of good things about this group," Dante said.

Steinberg added that some of the group's members were former University students.

Though some may say Slick Rick's time has passed, others anxiously await his arrival.

"He's not selling albums like Puff Daddy," Coolest Shop owner Garth Marriott said. "But he's as big, if not bigger, than Puff Daddy. The show is going to be tight."

Marriott, who graduated from the

University in 1997, said he likes the free feeling of Rick's rhymes.

Rick "had some albums that sucked in the middle (of his career)," Marriott said. However, he said "The Art of Storytelling" is a good album for fans of "old school."

Marriott said it's not easy to label Rick's unique hip-hop style.

"I don't think anybody's got the same style as Slick Rick," Marriott said.

On Thursday night, Steinberg said Rick is going to give his fans everything he's got.

"He will show off some new stuff, but for the fans, it's all about the old stuff," Steinberg said.

With the introduction of a new CD later in the year and collaborations with legends such as Snoop Dogg, Rick is rising, and Steinberg said music fans who want to see Rick should take advantage of tomorrow's concert.

"This will probably be Slick Rick's last stop in Eugene for awhile," Steinberg said.

Tickets are \$17 in advance, \$20 at the door, and are available at WOW Hall and Fastixx outlets (advance tickets are subject to service charge). The doors open at 8 p.m., and the show starts at 8:30 p.m.

E-mail reporter Marcus Hathcock at marcusathcock@dailyemerald.com.

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