

The People's Beat

Los Angeles may be an electric, debauched site of human convergence, but the diversity and productivity of its underground hip hop community is unparalleled. **People Under the Stairs** testify to this and to the longevity of more than just a few hip hop traditions that began there. Between the divergences of an industry with a penchant for producing mass-appeal formulas, and a vibrant independent underground scene committed to uninhibited creativity, there is crossover.

People Under the Stairs, with the combined prowess of L.A. MCs Thes One and Double K, are a throwback to the thematic roots of what hip hop was before MCs were able to fully indulge in the capitalistic glory of the late '90s.

There's something romantic about being the rare jewel strewn in the heaps and masses of tween-Myspace page-wannabe-MC types and pop-rap now on the market – People Under the Stairs straddle this line with style. The group can be found hanging out with other underground hip hop heavyweights and weirdo geek rappers like Pharcyde, Dilated Peoples, Hieroglyphics, Jurassic 5 and Del tha Funky Homosapien.

Aesthetically, Thes One and Double K point back to A Tribe Called Quest, Beastie Boys, NWA and Snoop Doggy Dogg. People Under the Stairs have an affinity for creating head-bobbing hip hop with staggering proficiency. Want proof? The duo has self-produced and engineered seven full-length albums. If these recordings don't convince you, check out the group's stage show.

People Under the Stairs play 9 pm Thursday, Oct. 27, at WOW Hall; Sold Out. – *Andrew Hitz*



Audio Fungus

A wave of electronica has crashed over Eugene and the nation. Fresh American dubstep and glitch-hop producers have been surfing that crest, but **Infected Mushroom** helped generate it. Long before drill-bits and chainsaws became the primary sonic tools of wubbed-up bro-step, these Israeli trance pioneers swirled layers of rhythm and synth with pounding four-on-the-floor beats. Rather than musical earthquakes, Infected Mushroom brings hurricanes.

Infected Mushroom stage shows are nothing short of psychedelic, combining a full PA, a live band and an overpowering visual display that is more hallucination than light show. Eschewing power-samples and pop-hooks for drip-piano, drums and gale-force bass, DJs Erez Eisen and Duvdev have continuously redefined the psytrance sound for more than ten years.

The group's 2009 full-length release *Legend of the Black Shwarma* incorporates elements of trip-hop, industrial and psych-rock with dance-blasting polyrhythms and complex melodies. Set to release another full album in early 2012, Infected Mushroom's first single, "Pink Nightmares," once again sweeps constricting genre classifications off the decks and storms into a thrashing wild-style vocal progression.

Oh yeah, these guys are coming off a massive, seemingly endless global tour on the strength of their ranking in the top 10 of the top 100 DJs in the world. Whether playing in playa dust at Burning Man, Ibiza beachfront clubs or Eugene, an Infected Mushroom event is a place for dance, trance, costume and lights. This is an acid test for the club generation.

Infected Mushroom plays 8 pm Thursday, Nov. 3, at MacDonald Theatre; \$18 adv., \$22 door. – *Patrick Newson*



The Haunting Spectacle

Jason Webley looks like he was assembled by Tim Burton using James Franco's face, Johnny Depp's facial hair and Jack Skellington's general demeanor – seriously, he does – and Webley easily could pass for one of Burton's characters.

Voted WOW Hall's "Favorite Male Performer" twice in the past four years, Webley is known for his unpredictable antics and mischief-making. He's also known for periodically assassinating his stage persona. After a Seattle performance in 2000, Webley led fans through the streets to a city park. There, a group of women removed and burned the songwriter's ever-present hat and trench coat, shaved his head and lowered him into a coffin. Webley was driven away in a hearse and disappeared for six months. Another mischievous incident involved hoards of fans, pirate costumes and a commuter ferry.

Webley is keeping pretty quiet about his upcoming show this Halloween, but ever unpredictable and ghoulishly geared, he's sure to make it a haunting spectacle.

Webley started performing with his accordion on Seattle streets in 1998. Since then he's released six albums and performed all over the world with acts like DeVotchka and Regina Spektor. Helping to fill out his sound this Halloween will be Jherek Bischoff on bass, Alex Guy on viola and Michael McQuilken on drums.

Stuck somewhere between Bob Dylan and Gogol Bordello, Webley will switch between guitar and accordion while lending his mercurial voice to the show – a voice that somehow oscillates haltingly between gruff and refined, jerking back and forth according to the whim of the song.

Webley's somewhat grandiose stage presence never lacks passion. And with songs like "Dance While the Sky Crashes Down," grandiosity is all but required.

Jason Webley plays 9 pm Monday, Oct. 31, at WOW Hall; \$10 adv., \$13 door. – *Natalie Horner*

