

ACEYALONE



Alone and Still Standing

If you found yourself in Los Angeles asking a real hip-hop head how the L.A. conscious hip-hop scene began there, said hip hopper would mention Project Blowed and its veteran founding affiliate **Aceyalone**.

Project Blowed is a hip-hop crew and open-mic workshop that began in the early '90s in South Central Los Angeles at a little spot called The Good Life Café. Aceyalone was the emcee who brought Project Blowed and conscious hip hop to the forefront of the West Coast backpacker psyche. Put it this way: without "Big Ace," emcees like Busdriver, 2mex, Pigeon John and Medusa might not have encountered the atmosphere required to reach national notoriety. In an era when gangsta rap was taking over the commercial airwaves via Dr. Dre and Ice Cube, Aceyalone was constructing masterful lyrics appreciated mostly by underground poets.

His breakout album, *A Book of Human Language*, is arguably the first of its kind. A hip-hop album that referenced Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* (go YouTube the song "The Grandfather Clock") and contained such a plethora of heady syntax that fools began dubbing it "nerd rap."

It is quite the treat to have Aceyalone come through town, as it was something he used to do a lot more of. As an older gentleman who's survived a lion's share of tour life, Aceyalone is a veteran showman. It will be exciting to see both how the years have treated him and what new material he has in store. And, as though you need more reason to go check this show out, Living Legends co-founder **Sunspot Jonz** joins the bill.

Aceyalone plays with Sunspot Jonz 9 pm Friday, May 18, at John Henry's; \$10. — Dante Zuñiga-West



SUNSPOT JONZ

Friends and Benefits

Great Hiatum is a band of UO alums that considers itself "dance rock," a fitting genre for the wide range of sounds these musicians bring to the stage. The foundation for most of Great Hiatum's songs is rock music, though the band dabbles in punk and electronic as well.

Wielding a style that might seem convoluted at first, the band does justice to the different genres it spans, and every song is a passionate cry, calling listeners to the dance floor.

The Empeys, a student band spawned from UO co-ops, brings funk and lightheartedness into its songs. Like Great Hiatum, The Empeys genre-hop, playing jazz-infused punk with a side of blues and the occasional sojourn into hip hop. The Empeys are one of those frolicsome and encouraging bands; tune into the group's lyrics and catch verses like, "You don't have to know how to party, we will show you."

Whether you love drum beats or horn sections, The Empeys have something for everyone and the group is poised to take on summer celebrations in full form.

Both Great Hiatum and The Empeys will be playing a benefit concert for the HIV/AIDS Alliance, in honor of **HIV/AIDS Alliance's AIDS Awareness Week**. So come dance, celebrate and raise awareness and funding for the alliance and those it helps.

The Empeys and The Great Hiatum play 1 pm Saturday, May 19, at the EMU Amphitheater; donations accepted. — Hailey Chamberlain

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