

DUSTY 45s

Portland soul and R&B legend
Ural Thomas comes to Eugene

Loads of tall tales surround legendary Portland soul singer **Ural Thomas**.

Some say Thomas opened for The Rolling Stones and Otis Redding and played alongside James Brown at New York's Apollo Theater. Others say Thomas lives in the same north Portland home he rebuilt from salvaged material after a fire burned down the structure in the '70s.

Who knows if any of it is true — and frankly, it doesn't matter. "Love for my people" is what Thomas says keeps him going after nearly six decades as a performer.

Born in 1939, he got his start in the late 1950s with the doo-wop band The Monterays. "I'm just repaying the people," he continues. "I feel like I'm 15!"

Thomas evokes a time when mythmaking was practically as important to a performer as what he did on stage. Those were the years when Ali was "the greatest," and he told us so.

Thomas' mother played music in church. "I absorbed all that music," he says, as he did his mom's interest in blues players like Jimmy Reed and Muddy Waters.

After meeting soul aficionado and drummer Scott Magee about a decade ago, Thomas formed the Pain and, until recently, the band played a weekly residency at Portland venue The Goodfoot Pub and Lounge. The shows quickly became one of Portland's hottest tickets.

Before Magee found Thomas, he tells me, he was "itching to play soul music." Finding a genuine soul music survivor to front his band felt like a blessing. "I knew of his

URAL THOMAS AND THE PAIN



music," Magee says. "We all know how lucky we are to play with Thomas."

So far, Portland has managed to keep Thomas under wraps. But now, after finding a manager, Magee says Ural Thomas and the Pain are ready to spread the love — to get "outside our comfort zone," as Magee describes it. "We've had a lot of developments," he adds, including a new record coming out next fall on Portland label Tender Loving Empire.

The album will be all-original material, Magee explains, with some new tunes but also some music that's been with Thomas for years. "Songs he'd forgotten about," Magee says. "Or just kind of had in his head."

Sometimes Thomas just sings a tune, Magee continues,

and the Pain will take it from there, figuring out the key and backing arrangements.

This won't be the band's first recording project. In 2016, the group released an eponymous compilation of the Pain working through a variety of Thomas' material from over the years. The album came out on well-known Seattle curators of lost soul, funk and R&B masterpieces Light in the Attic Records.

Throughout, Thomas and his band attack the music with working-class tenacity, whipping up the dance floor like their suppers depended on it — because, for musicians from Thomas' era, it did. ■

I-5 Killers presents Ural Thomas and the Pain, Seattle's True Loves and Eugene's Pancho + The Factory, 9 pm Thursday, March 29, at Hi-Fi Music Hall Lounge; \$8 adv., \$10 door, 21-plus.

HI-FI LOUNGE CONCERTS & EVENTS 21+ AGES
THURS MARCH 29: URAL THOMAS AND THE PAIN
W- THE TRUE LOVES AND PANCHO + THE FACTORY 10PM
FRI MARCH 30: HIGH AND MIGHTY BRASS BAND 10PM
SAT MARCH 31: THE KITCHEN DWELLERS & RUMPKE MOUNTAIN BOYS 10PM
THURS APRIL 5: THE COLIN TRIO 10PM
HIFIMUSICALL.COM
 44 E 7th Ave in Eugene (corner of 7th Avenue & Willamette Street)

PHUTUREPRIMITIVE
W- BLUETECH and BIZIO
MARCH 29 THURSDAY 8 PM DOORS 9 PM SHOW 18+ AGES

ALWAYS
W-FRANKIE ROSE
APRIL 8 SUNDAY 8 PM DOORS 9 PM SHOW 21+ AGES

GRAMMY AWARD WINNING
REBIRTH BRASS BAND
APRIL 19 THURSDAY 8 PM DOORS 9 PM SHOW 18+ AGES

Priority One
 HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

We specialize in keeping you comfortable!

(541) 359-3199
 www.priorityoneheating.com • CCB#154686

New Heating & Cooling System
 as low as
\$52 per month
Priority One
 HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

Expires May 4, 2018 • Not valid with any other specials, discounts or promotions. Some limitations may apply.

SAVE NOW
Tune-up Special
\$7900 regular price \$120
Priority One
 HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

Expires April 12, 2018 • Not valid with any other specials, discounts or promotions.

FIRST CLASS CANNABIS

TERPENE STATION

EXCLUSIVE MEDICAL PRICING | **MILITARY, SENIOR & STUDENT DISCOUNTS** | **10% OFF FIRST TIMERS**

645 RIVER ROAD • EUGENE • TERPESSTATION.COM

Do not operate a vehicle or machinery under the influence of this drug
 For use only by adults 21 years of age and older • Keep out of reach of children