

# DEF JAM '87 TOUR HITS THOMAS & MACK JULY 22

UNLV's Thomas & Mack Center comes alive at 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 22 when the Def Jam '87 Tour transforms the campus arena into a rap festival.

All seats are priced at \$16.50.

Featured stars include top rap performer LL Cool J, cool rocker Whodini and rhymer Doug E. Fresh and the Get Fresh Crew. Other acts are expected and will be announced soon.

A year and a half after the release of *Radio*, his smash debut album on the Def Jam/Columbia label, LL Cool J has returned with a vengeance. He is, as the title of his second LP boldly asserts, BIGGER AND DEF-FER (so that's what the initials BAD stand for!).

LL was on the cover of *The Face* and *Echoes* following a brief promotional visit to England in February 1986, and had critics resorting to rap-styled hyperbole in order to adequately describe their assessment of his talents: "The Master Blaster of Jaw Law" was the title concocted by *New Musical Express*.

In truth, there's not much anyone can say about LL that the 19-year-old Prince of Rap himself probably couldn't say better. Consider the following rhymes from "I'm Bad," the first single from the new LP:

"No rapper can rap quite like I can  
I'll take a muscle-bound man and put his face in the sand.  
Emcees can't win, I make 'em rust like tin  
They call me Jaws, my hat is like a shark's fin.  
I'm the baddest, taking out all rookies  
So forget Oreos — 'Eat Cool J cookies!'"

While these rhymes confine themselves to descriptions of LL's professional abilities, Stephen Holden, in a story for the *New York Times*, evocatively rendered the whole man when he wrote: "LL Cool J is a brawny giant with the animal magnetism and amiable self-assurance of the young Muhammad Ali."

In fact, LL's talent is at least as impressive as he claims. Not only did he write and rap all the lyrics on BIGGER AND DEF-FER, he also wrote a lot of the music and produced it as well.

LL's covered a lot of ground since he first captured national attention with

his brief but powerful performance of "I Can't Live Without My Radio" in the 1985 "Krush Groove" movie. The young upstart played a few dates on the sold-out New York City Fresh Festival, a 50-city tour that headlined Run DMC, Whodini, the Fat Boys, Grand Master Flash and the Furious Five. It was followed by the "Raising Hell" tour during the spring-summer '86 (with Run DMC, Whodini and the Beastie Boys).

That same summer the designated *Black Beat* "Heartthrob" was also tapped to write and perform a "Smart Sex Rap" as part of an anti-teen pregnancy radio campaign sponsored by the city of New York.

After these initial successes, Jon Pareles asked LL in the *New York Times* if all this success had wreaked any great change in his life.

"I just got my pants a size bigger so the money can fit in my pockets," he replied with a laugh, then noting seriously that he found himself being recognized more and more frequently. "Sometimes I stand out on the street near where the buses come in, just to see people bug out."

As his own producer on BIGGER AND DEF-FER, LL broadened his palette. The album moves from the aggressively high-energy rants of "I'm Bad," "Get Down," and "Aah, Let's Get III" to the cartoon fantasies of "My Rhyme Ain't Done," to the ultra-sexy ways of "Kanaday" and "Bristol Hotel." Stylistically, he moves from the relentlessly hard rap of "The Breakthrough," to the New Edition-styled "I Need Love," the Moonglows-inspired "Do Wop," to "Go, Cut Creator, Go" — in which Chuck Berry meets The Who on Farmers Boulevard in Queens.

And now LL looks to the future:

"There hasn't been a rap star yet, just rappers. There'll be a rap star when one of us is standing next to Michael Jackson at the Grammys, getting just as many as he is." That time may be upon us.

Following LL on stage is Whodini who has been a pioneer among their fellow rappers on the basis of the number and the quality of their videos. They started with "Magic's Wand" and "Rap Machine" and con-

tinued with "Escape," "Freaks Come Out at Night" (chosen one of the top ten videos of 1985 by *Black Radio Exclusive*) and "Big Mouth."

The summer of 1986 saw the appearance of the video for "Funky Beat," directed by esteemed filmmaker / playwright / author Melvin Van Peebles, of "Sweet Sweetback's Badass Song" fame. That fall they released "Growing Up," an anti-drug video financed by the New York State Division of Substance Abuse as part of the state's Operation Crack Down.

This is strictly in line with Whodini's long record of social concern. In 1984 they recorded a voter registration rap for the National Student Voter Registration Campaign and appeared with the King Dream Chorus & Holiday Crew, along with Whitney Houston, El DeBarge and New Edition. The star-studded group created "King Holiday," the benefit record released in January of 1986 for the first national observance of the great civil rights leader's birth.

Whodini also spoke out as part of the American Cancer Society's Great American Smoke-Out in 1986, and were given the key to Kansas City for their work on behalf of sickle cell anemia.

And now, once again, Whodini hits the road, this time as co-headliners with LL Cool J on the Def Jam '87 Tour. Once again, they play to take no prisoners. And this time, the magic words will be "Open, sesame . . ."

Add to this excitement Doug E. Fresh and the Get Fresh Crew and you have a show that just won't quit.

Since their million-plus gold record "The Shell" hit the charts, these three young men from New York City have been recognized as rappers extraordinaire.

According to critics they make music that literally dances in the air.

Presented by Syndicated Concerts, the Def Jam '87 Tour promises more live action on stage than Las Vegas audiences have seen in some time.

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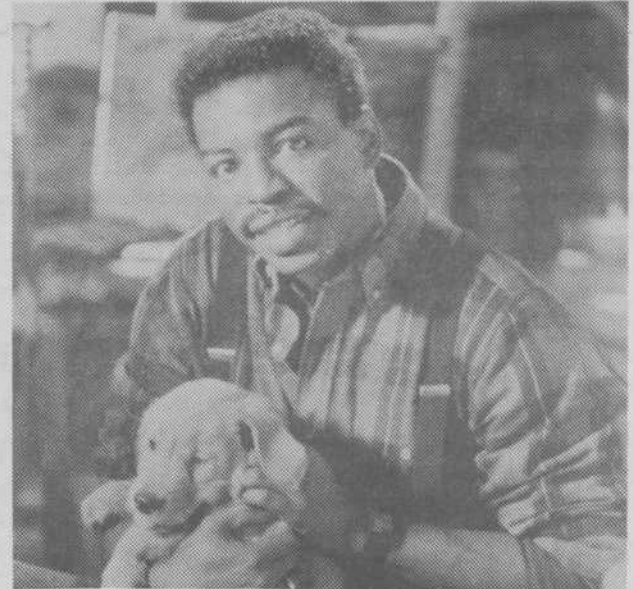
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the lack of opportunities and respecting David's individuality, told him, "Get out of here when you're ready," and, at 14, he did. Phymus Newman had an early influence. One early "gig" had audiences differentiating between David's singing vs. Sam Cooke's "You Send Me." He went to Detroit and recalls receiving \$300 for two songs. He first met Berry Gordy in 1957.

Having sung with The Primes, who later became The Temptations, he cites mutual respect for individuality and creativity as the key to long term togetherness in singing groups and in all other aspects in life. On the success of Diana Ross, he feels she has worked very hard for what she has achieved and is the "Queen." She's a very good mother and is really excited about her new marriage.

Regarding pursuing singing careers, he advises talented youth to cultivate the talent, but understand that it is very hard work requiring extensive rehearsal time. He cautions there is no substitute for a good manager and a good agent.

Receiving the news of Dr.



Host LeVar Burton cuddles an 8-week-old puppy he meets during the Reading Rainbow episode "Best Friends." That episode and four other new season V Reading Rainbow episodes will air the week of August 24 on public television stations. Reading Rainbow is a magazine format television series that motivates 5-to-8 year-old children to read by using the immediacy of TV to transport them to the magical worlds of books. (Photo by Sherman Bryce)

King's assassination while travelling through Tennessee on a Temptations/(Four) Tops tour he recalls as the one event that had a profound impact and stands out most in his mind.

David Ruffin, the man, enjoys the entertaining and indicates a desire to record with Aretha Franklin. He intends to continue singing and expand the business side. He intimates he is a "Black cowboy" who likes

horses, but finds the most joy spending time with his four year old grandson.

And then it was showtime for the voice that defies description. As he, appearing with Eddie Kendrick and backed up by The Splendors, glided and stepped through old favorites and classics, the thunderous applause following his "The Impossible Dream" was proof that the David Ruffin magic is still there.

Syndicated Concerts Present. . .

**DEF JAM '87 TOUR**

**LL COOL J WHODINI**

**DOUG E. FRESH & THE GET FRESH CREW**

And Special Guests  
8 pm • July 22  
**UNLV's Thomas & Mack Center**  
Tickets: Thomas & Mack Center Box Office, Nellis AFB and all Ticketron outlets.  
Tickets On Sale Friday, July 10 at 10 am