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OPEN MIC NIGHT

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- 4th **The Argyle Effect**
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- 11th **Flo Anito**
- 12th **Music Matters
Showcase**
- 13th **930moon**
- 18th **Joe Pollock**
- 19th **ilyAIMY and
their noise.**
- 20th **Angela Ortiz
w/ Castalia**
- 23rd **Geisert 8**
- 25th **Pat Paul w/Johnny
Action Figure**
- 26th **The Adrian Outfit
w/ Mike Malonius**
- 30th **Dylan Gilbert
w/ Fiddlin' Phil &
Johnny Bonneville**
- 31st **Fiction 20 Down**

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GET TO KNOW MURS: L.A. RAPPER ONE OF MANY AT ROCK THE BELLS

By Alfredo Flores

His confidence is unwavering, his style is unique, and his songwriting, storytelling and delivery are unquestioned. The mainstream hip hop world has only merely heard the buzz surrounding **Murs** — until now. In his latest single “Better Than The Best,” Murs unabashedly proclaims that he’s arrived after years of rising through the ranks of independent rap. Now he has a new album, “Murs for President,” his first on a major label, Warner Bros. And after touring this summer in the premier platform for live hip hop — Rock The Bells, stopping by **Merriweather Post Pavilion** on **July 27** — many more will surely get to know Murs.

In the “President” video, where he makes campaign stops in his fictional run for president, Murs boasts that he’s “the best to ever do it, the best that ever did it. Murs is better than your favorite rapper, admit it,” all with an incredibly upbeat bass-heavy sample of the Motown classic “I Can’t Help Myself (Sugar Pie Honey Bunch)” playing in the backdrop. The video is lighthearted, fun and comedic, like the other YouTube clips he’s posted. His anthem “L.A.” is about his beloved hometown where you should “come to the hood where we do the most good, Magic Johnson be owning everything like he should.”

“I do what comes natural and honest for me,” said Murs (a.k.a. Patch Cannon, born Nick Carter) in an interview with On Tap. “I try to create some positive music, and put a lot of effort, heart and soul to put out a nice hip hop record.”

Murs’ upbringing is diverse, starting off in Lynwood, a crime-infested L.A. suburb between Compton and Watts, between real Crips and Bloods gangs, where he and his friends collected bullet shells in the alley. But he’s also spent a few years in the suburbs east of L.A. where skateboarding, not gangbanging, was the norm. He’s seen both sides of city life, but has chosen to focus on the positive and thought provoking, what Murs calls sitcom rap, which takes elements from everyday life. His songs are about having fun, educating listeners on the historic significance of dreadlocks and the Rastafari movement, pursuing dreams, mourning friends that have passed away, the racial identities of dark-skinned white

girls, barbershops, fidelity and love.

His new album will feature more love songs than previous works.

“I tend to rap about women because 90 percent of the greatest songs in the world are about love and women,” Murs said. “And I think rappers have tended to forget that. Love is love, it’s a real thing, and it’s really underexposed in the hip hop world.”

Murs has spread his peaceful message through the years in his very own Paid Dues Hip Hop Festival, featuring himself and fellow independent rappers touring the West Coast with the promotional backing of Guerilla Union, the same group that’s responsible for Rock The Bells. This year’s Rock the Bells features a mix of indie hip hop artists, emerging talent like D.C. native Wale, and legends like headliner Tribe Called Quest, along with various members of the Wu Tang Clan.

“Guerilla Union has become somewhat of a family for me, and has been really instrumental in helping me to bring my dream of Paid Dues alive,” said Murs, the only rapper with his own music festival. “I’m overjoyed to be part of Rock The Bells, and can’t wait until this summer. It’s going to be amazing.”

Rock the Bells features Murs, A Tribe Called Quest, Nas, Mos Def, De La Soul, Raekwon, Method Man, Redman, Raekwon, Ghostface, Immortal Technique, Wale and others at Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, MD on July 27. Gates open at 11 a.m. Tickets range from \$40 to \$83 and are available at www.ticketmaster.com. For more information on Rock The Bells, visit www.guerillaunion.com/rockthebells 

