

Capitol Hill throws a party

Bands thrill fans from 5 stages

BY LYNSI BURTON

P-I reporter

One of Seattle's biggest summer music events is this weekend, and if you weren't at the Capitol Hill Block Party on Friday, Saturday is your last chance to check it out.

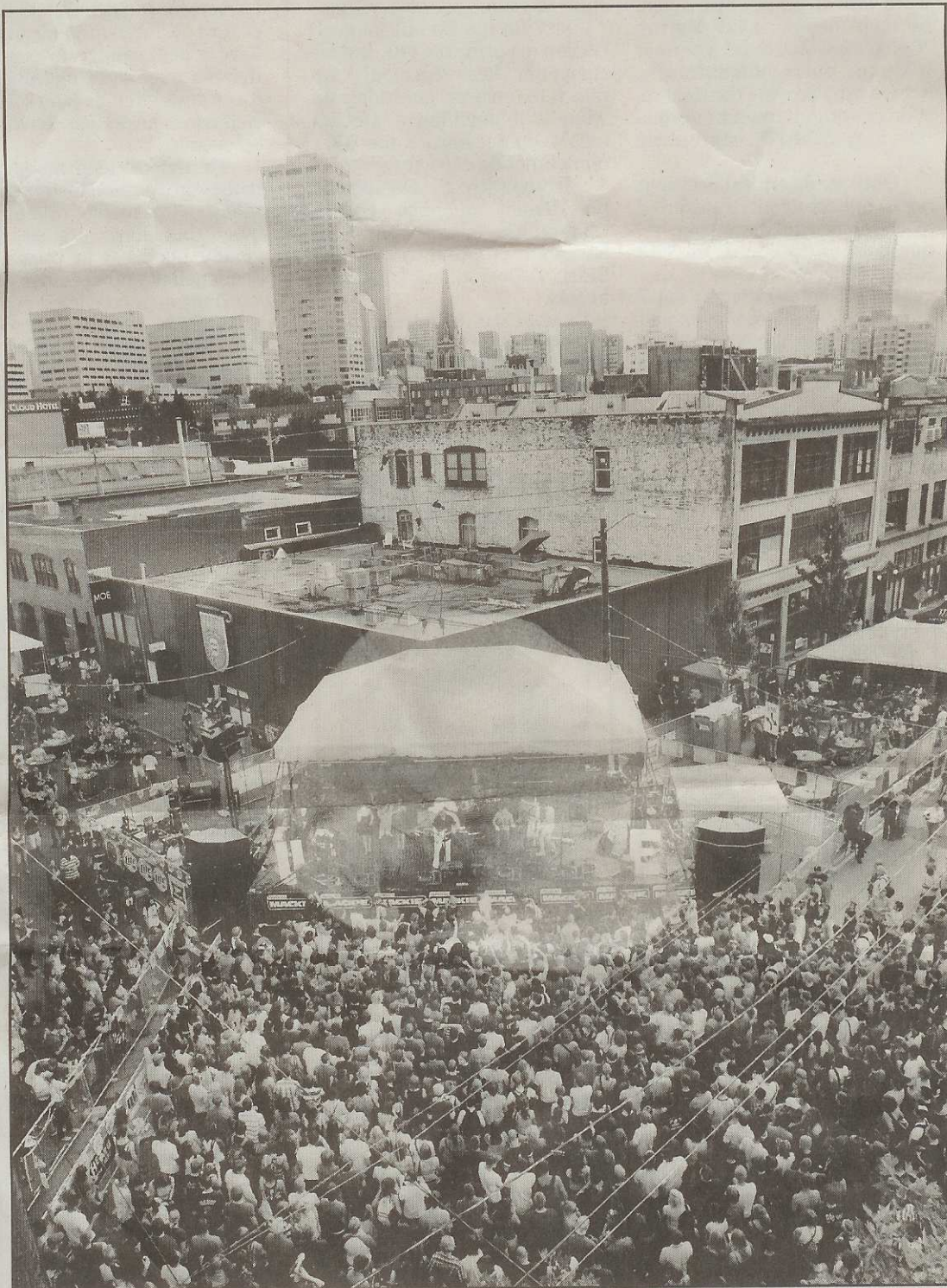
The nightclub strip on East Pike Street was buzzing with alternative music fans Friday, crowding around the Block Party's five stages under the beaming sun. In addition to music, there were abundant snack and drink stands, clothing vendors and voter registration drives, among other eclectic fare.

The party started at 4 p.m. with Black Eyes & Neckties, a rowdy Bellingham garage-rock band with a morbid dark side. The band's set at the Neumo's Stage was theatrical with an energetic urgency, complete with bloody makeup — though when the band thanked the crowd at the end, you'd feel as though you could introduce the musicians to your mother.

Opening at the Vera Stage was the young Talbot Tagora, a post-punk trio with a spacey quality characterized by incoherent, echoing vocals. The group's driving, frenetic quality was coupled with a stoic stage presence.

The Block Party really got going when local hip-hop duo Common Market hit the Main Stage, electrifying the crowd with DJ Sabzi's mixes on the turntable and RA Scion's socially conscious and positive lyricism. The crowd was engaged the entire set, chanting along and keeping time with hands in the air.

Electro duo Head Like a Kite also took to the Neumo's Stage on Friday with its surreal and richly layered electronica. The duo's hard, ethereal fare was charged with ferocious attacks on the guitar. One song, which was written last week, featured elements from Neil Young's "Ohio" and Dave Einmo breathed distorted vocals through a telephone receiver.



GRANT M. HALLER / P-I PHOTOS

U.S.E. performs on the Main Stage on Friday, the first day of the Capitol Hill Block Party.