

Brother Ali

The Undisputed
Truth ★★★★★

RHYMESAYERS

SPIN

**Indie hip-hop's uncommon
everyman takes no guff**

As befits an albino Muslim MC, this Minneapolis stalwart sets out to embody apparent contradictions. But the “thugged-out nerd” who peppers battle raps with Koranic wisdom is something way sexier and smarter than the “Howard Stern meets Howard Zinn” hybrid he suggests. He’s a doting dad who bristles with electric decency at everyday injustice and crows that “for me, ‘not broke’ is rich.” Producer Ant perfectly underscores Ali’s gruff cadence, simultaneously self-assured and stressed, with a melodic lope that scrunches soul vocals underneath loops of bluesy guitar. *KEITH HARRIS*