

# the IRON MAIDENS

**Worlds Only Female tribute  
to IRON MAIDEN**

**BY RICCIROCKS.COM.**



The IRON MAIDENS is The World's Only Female group paying tribute to the music of the legendary British heavy metal band, IRON MAIDEN. I caught their exciting stage show last weekend at the "RUST Festival" in San Bernardino, Ca. There where many tribute bands joined together to pay tribute to the US festival. It was one big tribute weekend for me.

The Iron Maidens have a new member who made her debut that day her name, is Elizabeth Schall. She looked & sounded like a perfect replacement for Josephine, who will be kept plenty busy working full time in the film/production business and pursuing other interests.

With Aja Kim as "The Air Raid Siren" on (what else?) vocals, Linda "Nikki McBURRain" McDonald (drums), Elizabeth Schall, the new Adrienne Smith (guitar), Sara "MiniMurray" Marsh (guitar) and Wanda "Steph Harris" Ortiz (bass), the girls entertained a large group of metal fans who definitely got their money's worth that day.

You can check out Liz in her original band, WINTERTHRALL, at [www.Winterthrall.com](http://www.Winterthrall.com) Liz studied to become a luthier at Musicians Institute in Hollywood and graduated with honors back in Spring of 2002. Her instructor was Mr. John Carruthers. Unfortunately she says, she never pursued a job in that field. Since then Liz has done basic guitar and bass repairs out of W.L.A.

Aja Kim has recorded and/or performed with a diverse roster of world class musicians and artists (both as a vocalist and a songwriter) which include saxophonist Clarence Clemons, Bruce Conte (Tower of Power), bassist/vocalist Marco Mendoza (Ozzy Osbourne, Whitesnake, Ted Nugent, Thin Lizzy), drummer Joey Heredia (Tribal Tech), and an Argentinean rock band, Wilma Palma, to name just a few. Her voice has been featured on radio and television commercials and TV theme songs ranging from Michelob and Asahi Beer to the recent reality TV show - "He's A Lady". She is also currently writing new material for her 2nd "untitled" solo CD. Linda McDonald, the drummer was in the all female Phantom Blue band, back in the late 80s. Linda and Sara are also in the all girl Ozzy tribute band, Little Dolls and are getting ready to form another all girl tribute band to Judas Priest! I can't wait for that.

**AAM:** Elizabeth, how did you like performing your first show with the Iron Maidens?

**Elizabeth:** I didn't like it; I loved every second of it! I've performed in other bands in front of a similar amount of people. But never with a crowd reaction such as the one from the Rust Fest. To feel that connection with the audience is something words just cannot describe.

**AAM:** Was it scary or nerve wracking, since it was your debut with The Maidens?

**Elizabeth :** Up until the dress rehearsal I was nerv

ous. After that night I was fully prepared. I felt no intimidation what so ever at any moment before or going on stage. Which is a bit awkward, but then again the bonding with The Maidens has helped tremendously. When you're up on stage, in front of a load of people that share the same love for the songs you're playing. And you have all the Maidens, the Maiden crew and of course all of your loved ones, friends and roommates watching from the crowd, there's nothing stopping you. My second show will be interesting, ask me the same question then. Hahaha!!

**AAM:** Tell me how this came up, whose idea (and when was it) to start the Iron Maidens, and are you all the original members?

**SARA:** I'm an original member, back in 2001. I answered an ad in the recycler because an Iron Maiden tribute band was looking for a replacement guitar player. I'd been playing Iron Maiden songs since I picked up my guitar, so the ad caught my attention. There was already two other girls in the band, and Linda and JoJo were looking at the project too at the same time. The Iron Maidens came together really quick.

**LINDA:** It all seemed to fall together at a chance meeting at a mysterious club in Huntington Beach in 2001. Some were looking for musicians to join their original band; some were looking for a good time, looking for love, looking for trouble, etc; hee, hee. They all found each other and a common love for Iron Maiden. It was a no-brainer. With a couple of tune-ups and a blown head gasket replaced over the years we are running wonderfully, smoother and better than ever.

**WANDA:** Before the Iron Maidens formed, we had already known each other through friends and acquaintances and coincidentally, Iron Maiden happened to be a favorite band for everyone. About 5 years ago, the singer decided it would be fun to put together an all-girl tribute to Maiden and the rest of the band agreed. The band has had a couple line-up changes but is still going stronger than ever.

**AAM:** So when you joined the Iron Maidens, did you have any idea the publicity and celebrity you would achieve? (They have even heard of you guys in Wales!!)

**LINDA:** I had a feeling it was going to be well received, at least locally judging by the attention we were getting thru the windows at the rehearsal room. But I never thought it would be so widely embraced. There are definitely Iron Maiden fanatics all over the globe and it's flattering to get emails and letters from people worldwide who love Maiden!

**SARA:** A couple weeks into the initial rehearsals, I was hanging out at my local guitar shop. Someone asked me if I'd heard about the all female tribute to Iron Maiden that was forming so there was a buzz

since month one! I'm honored to be in a tribute band that is nationally recognized. We work hard on all aspects of this band so it's fun to see it take off like it has.

**WANDA:** Not really, I knew the band was fairly successful on a local level but I had no idea that people had heard of us in other countries.

**AJA:** I know, isn't that incredible! The band had already established a great reputation as the world's only female tribute to Iron Maiden before I joined. So I knew it would be pretty high profile, but I had no idea how high! And it just keeps growing, especially since the release of the new CD. It's truly a testament to the real Iron Maiden and the staying power of the music they've created.

**AAM:** And are there any other female I.M. tributes?

**AJA:** As far as we are aware, we are the "World's Only Female Tribute to Iron Maiden."

**AAM:** What was the craziest show you ever played?

**SARA:** Our first out of town show at Hell's Kitchen in Washington! Besides the CO2 hose busting and taking out my amp, there was beer, cigarettes, and bodies flying the whole show. As well as these guys grabbing and licking our boots during our solos. Holy shit that was fun!

**WANDA:** I think the craziest show we ever played was in Nevada, opening up for Danzig. Because there were so many people there.

**LINDA:** The sickest show I can recall was the Cypress Hill Smoke Out at the Los Angeles Coliseum. I was so damn nervous all day long that I was sick to my stomach. And speaking of stomachs, I know Aja had food poisoning that kicked in during her first show with us at the Galaxy!

**AJA:** My first show ever with the Maidens was at the Galaxy Theater! The band hadn't played out in about six months. The energy in the room when we hit the stage was just explosive! It was so intense, people were jumping up and down, stage diving, you name it. Security was running all over the place trying to hustle people off the stage and back to the audience. It definitely set the tone for what the future would hold!

**AAM:** What does the future hold for The Iron Maidens?

**WANDA:** As far as future plans go, we're hoping to do some more international tours and out of state gigs.

**LINDA:** We are planning to promote our new full-length tribute CD starting this autumn and even more extensively so in 2006! We recorded it at Silver Cloud, where Bruce Dickinson recorded some of his solo work. And it features a brand new cover art of a beautiful female monster designed by Derek Riggs himself and includes 10 tracks and a bonus live track.

**AJA:** Right now we're enjoying the moment. We get so many requests from all over the world to come and play so hopefully more touring both here in the States, as well as the rest of the world - we want to see Europe!

**AAM:** Tell me about your other projects.

**SARA:** We do have a couple of original projects on the horizon.

**AJA:** We're doing a little writing together just to see what comes out of us. It'll be interesting to see where that path will lead. We all do various side projects. I have a solo CD out and also perform with former Tower of Power guitarist, Bruce Conte. But right now the love of my life is the music of Iron Maiden.

**SARA:** An all female tribute to Ozzy called The Little Dolls with Linda, and some hard disk recording I do with my brother.

**LINDA:** I have a side project with Sara, The Little Dolls, a female tribute to all eras of Ozzy, [www.thelittledolls.com](http://www.thelittledolls.com). Our singer for The Little Dolls, Deanna Johnston, is currently on the CBS reality show Rockstar INXS so we are on hold at the moment. In the meanwhile we are putting together a female Judas Priest tribute band. Watch for this one! I guess you could say I'm a workaholic. I also work with a female guitarist from Argentina named Carina Alfie, when she is in Los Angeles.

**WANDA:** In addition to the Maidens, I freelance as an independent musician pretty extensively for various different projects or groups. My last gig was with the Marina Del Rey Symphony Orchestra (on upright bass). I'm also a regular member of the South Coast Symphony in Orange County.

**AAM:** How often do you guys rehearse?

**WANDA:** We don't have a set rehearsal schedule; we rehearse as often as we can when everyone's schedule permits.

**AJA:** You have to rehearse regularly just to keep the chops up. This music is so complicated it needs to be played, often to keep from getting rusty with it.

**LINDA:** We usually rehearse once a week and it fluctuates from there as needed.

**SARA:** I feel like I know all the Sound Arena employees and they're all super cool!

**AAM:** Got any good stories from the road?

**SARA:** We had a food fight on the freeway to Portland. I threw an apple pie at my manager's side window, later he was attacked by wasps while driving. There's always an after the show merch table story too. Like the dude in NY who forgot to zip up his fly - yeah right!

**AJA:** When we went to Japan to entertain the troops, we had a day off in Sasebo and decided to go shopping and have an authentic Japanese meal. We ended up at a quaint little place where they had the fish-swimming round in wooden tubs right in front of you. They'd grab a net and got your tuna or whatever you wanted, water splashing everywhere as they caught the fish. Talk about FRESH sushi! Someone ordered octopus so they grabbed one out of the tank in front of us and ran it into the kitchen. I thought, "Well, that's the end of that, poor thing."

The next thing you know they come running back out of the kitchen and tossed the octopus back in the tank, still alive, just minus a leg! I must not have listened in biology class, because I didn't realize that octopi can grow back their limbs if they lose them. What a life, being kept around for body parts!

**WANDA:** We have lots of good stories from the road. One of our more memorable road trips included a visit from Motorhead. We were both touring in Washington at the time and the girls and I had a show that fell on one of Motorhead's "off" nights. Lemmy and Phil showed up and Phil sat in with us for a song, that was really cool.

**LINDA:** You forgot about the night before that one, Wanda. We were playing right up the street from where Motorhead was playing in Seattle the same night so our club arranged to have a private after-hours party with an open bar 'til the wee hours of the morning for us and Motorhead. That was one loooooong drive to Spokane the next day. Blegh. Then part two the next night in Spokane with the jam with Phil and another after-hours party. Damn. Those Washington folks like to have fun! Motorhead invited us to their show at the arena the next night but we had to drive up north. Next time!

**AAM:** What do you charge to play, say at a big festival? Or even a private party?

**LINDA:** Corporate events, private parties/functions, military tours, festivals, club dates, concert halls....etc...bring em on! We do it all and are extremely reasonable. We give the same full theatrical stage show whether we are performing locally or in Japan for the Military folks, or on a road trip somewhere in the U.S. or playing our favorite local clubs. If you're interested in a booking quote then you gotta talk to our manager, Mark Dawson, of DRZ Entertainment Group ([www.drzentertainmentgroup.com](http://www.drzentertainmentgroup.com)) about that. He's the man who takes care of that end, thank God!!! He can also be reached via our website at [www.theironmaidens.com](http://www.theironmaidens.com).

**WANDA:** Mark Dawson, our manager's email is [booking@theironmaidens.com](mailto:booking@theironmaidens.com) if anyone is interested in booking us.

**AAM:** I think a cool show would be you guys opening up for the real Iron Maiden!

Do you know if Iron Maiden has seen your DVD yet?

**LINDA:** I'm not sure if they've seen our DVD footage yet, but I do know they each own a copy of our brand new full-length tribute CD to Iron Maiden! I also know that Nicko McBrain has been to our website.

ALL ACCESS Magazine would like to thank Aja, Linda, Sara, Wanda, Elizabeth and especially Mark Dawson for taking the time to answer our questions. We wish you girls/guy the best, Rock on!

The Worlds Only female tribute to Iron Maiden, THE IRON MAIDENS will be performing at The 3rd Annual ALL ACCESS Magazine Music Awards Show Saturday, Nov. 5th . Paladino's 6101 Reseda Blvd Tarzana, Ca. 91335

The Maidens are nominated in several categories, so don't forget to cast your vote!! For more info [www.ALLACCESSMAGAZINE.COM](http://www.ALLACCESSMAGAZINE.COM) OR Email [ALLACCESSMGZN@AOL.COM](mailto:ALLACCESSMGZN@AOL.COM)