

## Interviews

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Photo by Ernie Manrique



Beautiful and bold. A metal maiden stronger than stone. She's an ace on the bass.

She's a metal queen. A heart of fire and endless dreams. **Please welcome Iron Maidens Wanda Ortiz**

**Metal Solider: Tell us about the Iron Maidens**

**Wanda: The Iron Maidens are the World's Only Female Tribute to Iron Maiden. The band is Aja Kim as "Bruce Lee Chickinson" on vocals, Sara Marsh as "Mini Murray" on guitar, Heather Baker as "Adrienne Smith" on guitar, Linda McDonald as "Nikki McBURRain" on drums and myself as "Steph Harris" on bass.**

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**The project was originally started as just a fun thing but after the first few shows, the band started getting a lot of calls and now we keep pretty busy! I don't think any of us ever thought that this would turn into a touring project!**

**The other girls in the band are my friends as well as bandmates and are very talented ladies. We all do other things in addition to The Iron Maidens.**

Aja has worked with several well known musicians including Clarence Clemens (The Bruce Springsteen band) and Bruce Conte (Tower of Power) and she also has her own solo project. Linda and Sara play in the all-girl band Phantom Blue and The Little Dolls (An All-girl Ozzy Tribute), and Heather , our newest member has her own solo project. As for me, I freelance quite a bit with different groups in the Southern California area, one of which is the South Coast Symphony.

**Metal Solider: How long have you been playing bass and who is your major influence?**

Wanda: I started playing bass in fourth grade at age 9: I didn't have any influences then but I liked music and just wanted to play something. On the day we were supposed to get our instruments, I was late to music class so all the school instruments got checked out except a little double bass standing in a corner. That was all that was left to play but that was fine with me ~ I was just happy to be able to make music. Later on, I started playing electric bass as well and found out about rock music through friends. Steve Harris was and is a major influence for me.

**Metal Solider: What has Iron Maiden's response been to the Iron Maidens**

Wanda: I'm not sure because I've never asked them what they thought of us. But we met them once and I got the impression that they were a bit tickled that a group of girls would think to form a tribute band to them. They are also supportive because they have helped us get some press (we were interviewed for their fan club magazine) and they don't seem to mind that we're around.

**Metal Solider: Could there be a tour with the two band?**

Wanda: It's never been discussed as far as I know but I think it would be a really cool idea. Maybe, if Maiden decides to play songs off a new CD they just released, we could open up for them playing their older material.

This way, they won't feel pressured to play their older songs that are fan favorites and the fans get a double dose of Maiden music. I heard that Metallica had a tribute band open for them before and it went over pretty well.

**Metal Solider: Do you see Steve Harris as your god?**

Wanda: Well, I would say that's a bit extreme. He is a major influence for me though.

**Metal Solider: Ok lets play the rating game.. 1 to 10 (10 being the best)**

Wanda: I'm really not comfortable rating other artists but I'll comment:

Vixen- I've heard of them but I'm not really familiar enough with their music to comment. I think I remember hearing a song or two way back when but I'm not really sure.

Joan Jett – I've always liked Joan Jett – she has some great hooks which makes her

music really “catchy”.

I saw her play once at Magic Mountain, an amusement park in Southern California, and she put on a great show.

Lita Ford – She has attitude and fun, catchy songs. I like her.

The Great Kat – I have a couple friends that are into more obscure bands that have mentioned her to me before but I’ve never heard her music.

Kittie – They have a lot of energy and look like they’re having fun! I’m always glad to see new all-girl groups popping up. 😊

Phantom Blue ;) – I would have to say that, musically, this was my favorite all-girl band.

In addition to having some cool songs, they could really play well so, for me, that was a bonus. In fact, I got their CD “Built To Perform” way before I ever met Linda or Sara. Now I’m playing in a band with them. How lucky is that!?

**Metal Solider:** Your playing Run to The Hills live on stage what are you feeling at that moment?

**Wanda:** It’s the same good feeling I get when I’m hanging out with friends just having fun.

**Metal Solider:** What has been your greatest moment in rock n roll so far?

**Wanda:** I’ve been lucky to have a lot of great moments so it’s hard to pick out only one as the best. However, there are some moments I remember better than others ~ like when the band met Iron Maiden or when Phil from Motorhead sat in with us.

**Metal Solider:** We here at Metal Solider salute you and the Iron Maidens. What do you want to say to the fans?

**Wanda:** Thanks for your support! If you’re interested in checking out one of our shows, please go to [www.theironmaidens.com](http://www.theironmaidens.com) for upcoming dates. We’d love to meet you.

**Metal Solider:** Please finish the statement Metal Solider ???

**Wanda:** Metal Solider – thanks for your help supporting musicians who we might otherwise not have an opportunity to read about and thanks for supporting metal!