

the increasing popularity of tribute bands in recent years has contributed to an already thriving music scene in the Pacific

Northwest. If you have a favorite band, there's a good chance that there are numerous local bands paying tribute to these artists throughout the country.

Many tribute bands are able to reproduce the sound of the original artist with an uncanny clarity of resemblance. One such band, known as the Iron Maidens, has gained significant recognition over the last five years by recreating the artistic endeavors of metal giants Iron Maiden.

The all-female Iron Maidens, based in Los Angeles, Calif., are a classic example of what one can expect from a tribute band that remains faithful to reproducing an original band's material with the utmost respect and integrity. The Maidens have played to audiences throughout the world, and the group will be playing several gigs in the Pacific Northwest as part of its "Route 666" tour in June.

In essence, bands such as the Iron Maidens have emerged in an effort to not only pay tribute to the artists they love, but to represent and appeal to a segment of the music-appreciating public that may not have been adequately satisfied with the limited mainstream exposure of the original artists.

"There was a booming tribute scene that was really starting to take off in the Los Angeles area,"

says Maidens drummer Linda "Nikki McBURR" McDonald. "But it was lacking quality — in presentation and delivery — in some of these bands. There was this big void for metal. There were some Iron Maiden tribute bands (in the area). The people that go to these shows love the bands that they are going to see and pay tribute to, and they know when the music is not represented well."

The members of the Iron Maidens decided to put together a solid show consisting of any combination of approximately 40 songs that accurately showcases the band's entire career. Their stage shows are impressive to say the least, encompassing a variety of smoke and lighting effects, as well as a significant theatrical element. The Maidens even have "Eddie" — the infamous Iron Maiden mascot — make an appearance during their performances. In addition, they have

created their own mascot — named "Edwina" — who was conceptually developed by Derek Riggs, who designed the original Iron Maiden album covers. Their live performances also include appearances by the grim reaper, the devil, and others.

"Iron Maiden fans are religious about this music," explains McDonald. "It's an experience. They know every word and all the nuances of the music."

The Maidens insist on producing a top-notch live presentation out of respect for the fans of Iron Maiden. Because of this, tribute bands need to function on a completely different level than typical cover bands.

"With cover bands, you don't have to represent the songs and the artist and the vibe," continues McDonald. "You just play the music, and you do a variety of different artists. But in a tribute band, you recreate the vibe of the live show, and you even go as far as to replicate the costumes that they wear. You really try to deliver and recreate what the songs sound like on the album."

Tribute bands — if they are extraordinary — often enjoy significant followings in their own right, as legions of fans regularly

attend their concerts as a means of getting their fix of their favorite bands. Often, the original artists these tribute bands are covering have either stopped touring, tour rarely, or are deceased (as is the case with Jimi Hendrix, who is locally represented by guitarist/impersonator Randy Hansen).

"Unfortunately, Iron Maiden doesn't really get out to the U.S. enough, in the opinion of Iron Maiden fanatics," says Maidens vocalist Aja "Bruce Chickinson" Kim. "So I think that we deliver it well enough that we're able to appease the Maiden fans and help them get their Maiden fix on until the real Maiden gets back into town again."

In the Pacific Northwest alone, tribute bands have emerged representing virtually every musical interest. In addition to Randy Hansen's Jimi Hendrix tribute, other tribute bands include No Quarter (Led Zeppelin tribute), Jar of Flies (Alice in Chains tribute), Problem Child and Hell's Belles (AC/DC tribute), Fascination Street (The Cure tribute), Harvest (Neil Young tribute), Shine (Pink Floyd tribute), Jett City (Joan Jett tribute), Busted Stuff (Dave Matthews tribute), Black Celebration (Depeche Mode tribute), the American Night (Doors tribute), The Landsharks (Jimmy Buffet tribute), Anthem (Rush tribute), and Crazy Train (Ozzy Osbourne tribute).

Of course, these are merely a few of the tribute bands that frequently perform in the region. For more comprehensive listings and information about local and national tribute bands, visit www.tributecity.com. More information about the Iron Maidens can be obtained by visiting their Web site at www.theironmaidens.com.

Upcoming tribute shows

- **The Iron Maidens** (Iron Maiden tribute)
June 16 — The Swiss, Tacoma
June 17 — The 4th Ave. Tavern, Olympia
June 21 — The Bullseye, Spanaway
June 22 — Maggie O'Toole's, Lakewood
June 24 — Catbox, Tacoma
- **Whiskey Creek** (Lyrryd Skynyrd tribute)
June 20 — Red Wind Casino, Olympia
- **Problem Child** (AC/DC tribute)
July 1 — The Taste of Tacoma
July 15 — The Royal Bear, Algona
- **Harvest** (Neil Young tribute)
July 1 — The Taste of Tacoma
July 22 — Olde Shipwreck, Tacoma
- **Jar of Flies** (Alice in Chains tribute)
July 1 — Hell's Kitchen, Tacoma
- **Shine** (Pink Floyd tribute)
July 3 — Hell's Kitchen, Tacoma
- **Anthem** (Rush tribute)
July 21 — The Royal Bear, Algona

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