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**Metal Monday Amoeblog: The Iron Maidens Interview**

POSTED BY **BILLYJAM**, JULY 27, 2009 08:52PM | COMMENTS (1) [SHARE](#) [f](#) [t](#) [e](#) [...](#)

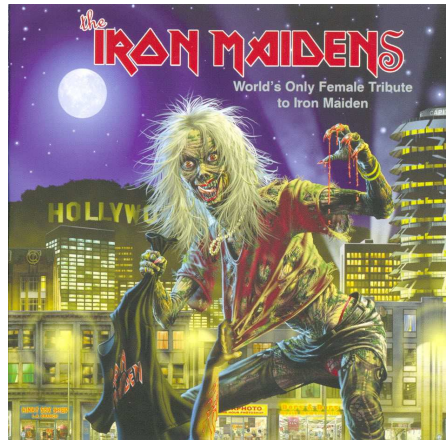


Los Angeles, CA hard rock band **The Iron Maidens** are, as they fairly claim, "the world's only female tribute band to **Iron Maiden**." But they are also most proficient and accomplished musicians, who not only do justice to their heavy metal heroes, but also add a new lease on life to the veteran UK metal band whose music they've been avidly honoring since they formed eight years ago.

They've even recently recorded and released a kick-ass CD/DVD set of Iron Maiden songs. titled **Route 666** (a nod to **Flight 666**). The original Iron Maiden-esque cover art of a female monster is done by **Derek Riggs**, creator of Iron Maiden's mascot, Eddie, and numerous signature Iron Maiden album covers familiar to any Maiden fan.

The five member group, comprised of women with diversified musical backgrounds ranging from orchestral and musical theater to blues and rock, is comprised of **Linda "Nikki McBURRain" McDonald** on drums, **Sara "MiniMurray" Marsh** and **Courtney "Adriana Smith" Cox** on guitars, **Kirsten "Bruce Chickinson" Rosenberg** on vocals, and **Wanda "Steph Harris" Ortiz** on bass.

Hard rocking and hard working, the band's busy upcoming schedule includes playing an all ages show at the **Trevi Entertainment Center** in Lake Elsinore, CA tomorrow, **Second Wind** in Santee, CA on Thursday, **The Key Club** in Hollywood on August 12th, the **The VooDoo Lounge** in San Jose on August 14th, and **Annie's Social Club** on Folsom in SF on August 15th. Fresh back from a Saturday night gig in Kansas, I caught up with the band yesterday to talk about, among other things, Iron Maiden's music, the difference between a tribute and a cover band, and being women in a male dominated field. The interview, which the band members collectively answered in true democratic fashion as a unit, follows below the video clip of the band performing "Revelations" at **Cane's** in San Diego last month. For more info on the Iron Maidens visit their **official website** or their **MySpace**.



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**Amoeblog:** Whose idea was it to form the Iron Maidens and how did it initially all come about?

**Iron Maidens:** It was a mutual love of Iron Maiden. We knew each other from here and there and with down time from other bands we were in, we got together just to have fun and jam some Maiden songs. From the start the response was phenomenal, with guys fighting to look in the rehearsal door window to see who was playing these great songs. Then we thought, 'Hey, let's do 1 show for a goof and see how it goes.' It sold out and we haven't looked back since.



**Amoeblog:** In the initial formation stage of the band, assuming you auditioned for parts, what was the overall response like -- meaning were there a lot of qualified women who were fans of and played Maiden well that auditioned?

**Iron Maidens:** Well, the core was there from the start cause we knew or knew of each other, but we did audition a few. We have had a couple line up changes in the past, a bass player, couple singers, and we are on our 4th Adrian Smith at the moment. It is

extremely hard to find women who can play Iron Maiden proficiently, but the more the word has spread about this project, the more people try out when there is an opening. On our last round of auditions we looked for 11 months for our Adriana Smith, aka Courtney Cox, and it took us 9 months to find our new Bruce Chickinson, aka Kirsten Rosenberg. Iron Maiden is extremely complex; many tried, only 2 succeeded.

**Amoeblog:** As women playing Maiden, what advantages or differences do you face?

**Iron Maidens:** Well, we are lucky that we have an advantage in that we have 3 types that come to see us. 1 -- people who have seen us and know what to expect and tell their friends, 2 -- guys who say "wow, I can't get a girl to even listen to Iron Maiden with me, let alone play it...I gotta see them," and 3 -- the doubters who say women don't belong in metal and this will be a train wreck so I will go for a laugh. They do and once they hear the 1st song they realize we are not here to annihilate the music of Iron Maiden, let alone to humiliate ourselves, and become converts! We try to create the show as close to Maiden as possible, but we are women so you will hear a female tone on the vocals. We keep it pure but add our own fingerprint as well.

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### Iron Maidens "The Prisoner" @ Santa Fe Springs Swap Meet two weeks ago

**Amoeblog:** You are, as you say, the only female Iron Maiden tribute band. But beyond just that, women in music, especially in harder rock, are still in the minority. Why do you think that there is such an unbalanced ratio?

**Iron Maidens:** In the USA very much so. Europe is much more understanding and embracing. We think it's still the male stereotype that only guys can rock hard or play metal the way it should be played and we go out to prove that old bromide wrong. A good musician is a good musician, regardless of gender!

**Amoeblog:** On that topic, would you like to list your all time top five favorite female rockers?

**Iron Maidens:** Doro, Phantom Blue, Girl School, Pink, and Jennifer Batten.

**Amoeblog:** Of all the songs you do, what are your favorite two or three Iron Maiden songs to do live?

**Iron Maidens:** That's a hard one cause they are all so great and mood does play a part, but we would have to say: "Phantom Of the Opera," "Powerslave," and "Alexander the Great" [see/hear below], because Maiden has never played that live.

**Amoeblog:** I am sure you guys have seen the great new Iron Maiden movie [Flight 666](#), but I wondered, do you guys routinely watch Iron Maiden concerts together as part of your practice sessions?

**Iron Maidens:** Yes, we have and it is great. Actually, the film crew came down and shot footage of us at **The Key Club** in Hollywood, CA the night before Maiden played LA and they interviewed us. Haven't seen the DVD but I guess we landed on the cutting room floor. Yes, always watching everything we can to try and get as close to the Maiden stage show and sound as possible.

**Amoeblog:** I know you bill yourselves as a "tribute band," so do you often have to correct people if they call you a "cover band" or do you consider Tribute and Cover the same thing?

**Iron Maidens:** It's all words really, but traditionally cover bands cover various artists and tribute bands are specific to one. A tribute band strives to recreate the whole experience of seeing a particular band, so we are definitely a tribute band as opposed to a cover band.

**Amoeblog:** I imagine that it is more difficult to try to recreate original songs than to interpret them in a whole new way. Is it hard when you try to recreated the originals and discerning Maiden fans in the audience are comparing you always with the original or do you feel that you do the original with a subtle new spin?

**Iron Maidens:** We always learn the studio version first and then adapt the live versions and since we are female we put our own fingerprint on it without straying away from the original vibe and feel. Some songs we play slightly slower or faster than Maiden but since it is a tribute you gotta stay close to the vest -- or bra, should we say. Haven't had any complaints yet.





**Amoeblog:** Do you ever do your own songs when you get together for practice or do you stick rigidly to Maiden music?

**Iron Maidens:** We only do Maiden or songs Maiden has covered when we get together as TIMs. We all have side projects from other tributes to cover bands to originals (Linda and Sara are in Phantom Blue, Linda's original all female metal band that was on Geffen and Roadrunner Records).

**Amoeblog:** I read somewhere that someone from Iron Maiden came to your show or met you or talked with you guys or something. Would you care to tell me about that and what the interaction was like for both parties?

**Iron Maidens:** Yeah, well they heard about us forever and then invited us backstage in LA to meet us and that was great. We have also been fortunate enough to have **Michael Kenney** (Steve's bass tech and IM's keyboard player) perform a couple times with us live. We also did a couple songs with **Nicko McBrain** joining us on drums. Then in Feb of 08, Steve's daughter, Lauren Harris, opened up for us and Steve and Bruce both came to see the show. They had a great time and Steve came backstage and was just so wonderful and complimentary. It was an amazing experience to meet him and it was a little scary too, in a very intimidating but good way!!!

**Amoeblog:** Anything to add?

**Iron Maidens:** We just want to thank everyone who comes out to support us and shares the love of Iron Maiden and don't forget to check us out at [www.theironmaidens.com](http://www.theironmaidens.com)! We have a load of dates coming up this summer, so please check our website on the shows page to see when we may be performing in a town near you!! Up the Bloody Irons, Baby!!!!



The Iron Maidens "Alexander The Great" live

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**POSTED BY VALVE ON JULY 15, 2010 AT 01:52AM**

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