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ISSUE#10



# BALIGIRLS

# oldiron



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Letter From the Founder:

Hey everyone, thanks for picking up issue 10 of the Seattle PA. For those that don't know, this has been entirely funded by myself, and printed on a copier in my kitchen. As we have grown, the costs have increased significantly, so we have decided to get some outside help. Thanks to everyone who has helped and offered help getting this funded. Brandy Rettig, Sandy from Sin In Linen, Jerad from Rabid Hands Tattoos, Jesse at the Company Bar, and Dylan and everyone at the Highline. If you like what we do and want to contribute, check out our store on our website at [theseattlepa.com](http://theseattlepa.com). We are also always looking for new sponsors to help us grow, and are always looking for writers and other people to come aboard and help us out. As always, thanks to the entire PA staff for all their hard work and passion, and thank you for reading. Sincerely,  
James Ballinger



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# BALI GIRLS

By Brandy Rettig  
Photos by Matt Koroulis

My buddy Todd pointed up to the Neumos stage as Bali Girls were setting up and asked me, "Do you know these guys? Are they any good?" I smiled a knowing smile. It was the same smile I had once displayed to an unassuming date who accompanied me to a doom metal show and, after a bit of introductory tuneage, shouted into my earplugs that he could only stay for one more song because he had to get up early. That's where the smile came in - I knew what he didn't: their next song would be no less than 50 minutes long. In fairness, Todd's question was probably the same one on the minds of much of the rest of the audience who, if they had heard of Bali Girls before, likely hadn't heard them play in decades. None of them had any idea of what they were about to get hit with. Still smiling I told him, "Hold on to your hat Todd--these guys are gonna blow you the fuck away!"

For the record, I was not wrong. When Bali Girls fired up that night, I watched as the jaws of audience members flopped open. The place absolutely exploded in response to the sound emanating from the frenzied trio of Brian Burnside (guitar, vocals), Brian "Slicey" Kraft (bass), and Randall Payne (drums). The energy these guys created on stage was so tangible that my hair literally stood on end.



Burnside says of Bali Girls, "When Randall's on fire, so are we." I'll tell you what, these guys stoked an absolute inferno that night! If the name Bali Girls sparks some distant memory for you, it's probably because they've actually been around since the '90s. Formed in early 1995, they released their self-titled album in 1996 on Bittersweet Records. In '97, they showed up on a Northwest compilation titled 6 from the Farm released by Note-Farm Records. 1998 brought A Housewife's High, a live album on Spork. Then...nothing...for a very, very long time. The rumor was that Bali Girls had broken up. "We never broke up," Burnside explained. "I think it was a typical scenario of taking a break but becoming an unintended long hiatus... it wasn't until we were loading up to play our first show since we started working together again that we actually did the math on how long it had been: 12 years. We always knew we'd play together again, but we never intended on that much time to pass."

Original Bali Girls members Burnside and Payne met in 1987 in Bellingham, where Burnside intended to go college. Instead of attending class, Burnside began attending band practices with Payne. "So much for college," he joked. They played together in the band Loaf for three years until the sudden death of one of their bandmates. Burnside and Payne were bereaved but determined to continue playing together in some incarnation. Ultimately, they formed Bali Girls with bassist Brad Lease.

When the partnership with Lease ended in 1996, Bali Girls were in need of a bass player. Burnside recalls, "Randall and I went to see Caspar Brötzmann at the RKCNDY. Engine Kid played right before them, and I remember telling Randall, 'We need a bass player like that.'" As luck would have it, Kraft (who was the Engine Kid bass player Burnside had referred to) explained how he "saw Bali Girls in '96 open for Nomeansno at Moe's. Engine Kid had just parted ways, and Jade Devitt (former Engine Kid drummer) and I went to the show. I remember telling Jade 'I would love to play in that band' even though they scared me just a little bit." Burnside ended up getting Kraft's phone number from a mutual friend. "It wasn't until Slicey joined the band that we finally became a unit all working towards the same thing" Burnside said.

After a few years of shows, recording, and touring, Burnside explained that "things were changing for all of us, and the regiment of touring 6 months out of the year had taken its toll." Kraft left Seattle and the remaining two busied themselves with other projects: Burnside with Triple X Audio (which eventually became Heavy Hearts) and Payne with Leatherboy. The Bali Girls hiatus had begun.

Kraft moved back to Seattle in 2004 and "recruited myself for Heavy Hearts after the departure of the Triple X Audio bass player, Dan Infecto." Kraft was rooming with Payne at the time, and the three of them threw around the idea of playing together again. But it wasn't until 2012 when the three really started practicing together again in earnest. These sessions, as described by Kraft "were like the good friend that you haven't seen for twenty years, and when you finally reunite, you feel transported to the day after the last day you had last seen them. So, it felt natural to carry on the Bali Girls name." Bali Girls were back.



When talking about present-day version of the band, the guys all say that the main difference now is that they are able to harness their wild energy in a way that they weren't able to in their younger days. Kraft says, "The performance does not feel much different to me" but adds that "as musicians, we have matured with our writing and playing."

The Bali Girls' material of the 90's was written and performed more with passion and pain and less with control and restraint, whereas our new material draws on the same pain, passion and hopes, but is presented in a more controlled and thoughtful manner." Payne agrees, "The same passion, intensity, and raw emotion exist today as it always did - whether it's in our rehearsal space or on stage." Burnside concludes, "It used to be all about the moment, being spontaneous, and just letting crazy shit happen. We can still do that but in controlled sections. I actually enjoy it more now than I used to because I get the same raw feelings, but I can rein it back in and utilize structure to showcase the creative noisy stuff."

Whether you're a fan of Bali Girls from forever ago or are just getting turned on to them, Burnside has good news for you: "A couple years ago we decided to write a record." Their new album, Dead Reckoning West, was recorded at Rogue Island Studios with Eric Janko and mastered by Kurt Bloch. It was sent to press on CD in March of 2014, with plans for



a future vinyl edition. Record release shows are scheduled for Tacoma at Java Jive on May 17th and Seattle at the Sunset on May 24th.

Once you see Bali Girls live, once you FEEL what it sounds like when you put drumsticks in the hands of a mythical strongman with eighty ferociously pounding arms, once you HEAR what it sounds like when a bass player rips out all the stock coil pickups in favor of a Humbucker and guts all amplitude and frequency circuits to create the least resistive path possible to output sound, once you WITNESS how the incorporation of noise effects and a host of 1970's style analog delays create landscapes out of sound, you too will smile my same knowing smile when you're asked, "Do you know these guys? Are they any good?"

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<http://baligirls.bandcamp.com/>

# Old Iron

By Jeffery McNulty  
Photos by Matt Koroulis

When you first delve into Old Iron's new record *Cordycleps*, you might think it's a good idea to research the title. Take it from this writer, do not look at the Google images. This is the stuff nightmares are made of. In the real world this fungus attracts insects and spiders and sometimes forces them to climb a tree before they die to have the best chance of spreading the spores. It has been doing this for more than forty million years. It grows from the inside out. Absolutely horrifying to see! The concept for this album is just growing upon this terror (pardon the pun). Guitarist Jesse Roberts explained, "The story focuses on a meteor that hits Earth carrying an extraterrestrial strain of cordyceps fungus with it. While extracting iron for hunting tools from the fallen meteor, people are exposed to the fungus. As a result the fruiting body of the cordycleps grows from the pineal gland in the victim's brain causing intense hallucinations before splitting the host's skull, allowing the fruiting body of the fungus to grow skyward and send out more spores." When confronted with the inherent nerdiness of the song titles Jesse responded with a matter of fact, "They're nerdy because I'm a nerd."

Initially intended as a demo, *Cordecleps* was recorded during September of 2012 in Jesse's basement with former drummer Brandon Ramsey (Rat Path). Things turned out much better than expected according to bassman, Jerad Shealy, "Jesse is something of a wizard at engineering... so we just decided to release what we came up with. Doing it on our own



also afforded us the option to take our time tweaking the songs. It was an awesome learning experience. I think it will help us out a great deal for the next time we hit the studio." Their latest record is a dark journey indeed, that grows with intensity over the course of the album. Jesse as a producer is adept at making the heavier loud parts seem to explode after they lull you with circular rhythms reinforcing the over-arching story.

Jerad and Jesse, both tattoo artists, first met in 2007. Then when they worked together at Lucky Devil they hit it off, but at that stage they were both in other bands and didn't have the time to play together. "As time went on and we weren't as busy, we started jamming for fun. Jesse was still pretty busy touring and with work so nothing materialized for a while," said Jerad, "I ended up writing a couple songs and talking Brandon into drumming for them. I think Jesse came to jam with us once and that was that. When Brandon left to focus on Rat Path, Trent McIntyre (Grenades) offered up his services. We didn't know him very

well, but Old Iron had played with his other band a few times. He came to practice and nailed a few of the songs first try." Trent is in quite a few other projects, "I first met them when we played a show together with another band I was in called Giza. I heard that their drummer quit and that they were booked to play Capitol Hill Block Party. And as it just so happens, they were supposed to play right before my band Grenades on the same stage, haha. I offered to play with them because I was really into what they were doing, and it worked out." "He's a great fit for us, and we couldn't be happier with the direction he is helping us take the band," Jerad added. When I asked Trent how he keeps it all together he laughed, "It was a pretty gradual process, but I'm used to it now. I guess I just don't like the thought of not being on all these records and playing all these different shows. Booking can be a bit of a nightmare at times though!"

It's clear that they all enjoy creating music for the same reason: simply because they love to. "We just play to have fun and get heavy. It's exciting to see such a reemergence of heavy music in Seattle and we're really honored to be a small part," Jesse said. Not that small of a part, their pedigree is impressive.



Jerad's past projects include Seattle heavies iamthethorn and The Helm. Jesse played in The Ruby Doe for many years, one of the bands that kept heavy rock alive in the Northwest at the end of the 90's and into the new millennium, "Around the time that our drummer moved to LA, I had started playing with Nat and Jon from Akimbo which turned into Sandrider. I'm still playing bass with those dudes. I spent about five years touring and recording with Kid Congo Powers and the Pink Monkey Birds on guitar/keyboard/vocals. Now it's just Sandrider and Old Iron!" Jesse goes on to describe their songwriting style, "It's a fairly organic process. We bring stuff in and arrange parts together peppered with stuff we come up with during practice." Jared agrees, "We've come up with songs by jamming and we also work on riffs at home and bring them in when there is a solid idea. We never seem to come in with a song fully written though. We always hash it out together. So far Jesse and I have written most of the riffs. Trent has come up with some crazy ass drum beats that we've made stuff up to on the spot. I would love to incorporate some of that into our music in the future." A future that is looking good for Old Iron: "Well, we just put out our first full length." Jared continued, "We are currently in the process of sending that bitch off to get pressed to vinyl. We are also writing new material for a follow up full-length and we're kind of half-assed looking for a label to sign to..." They just recently played two nights with Brothers of the Sonic Cloth, April 12th in Tacoma at The Bleak Outlook Fest and April 13th at the Northern in Olympia. Their next show is at the Highline April 28th with Uzala, Black Queen and Swampheavy. They are discussing plans for a quick tour down the coast and back for later this year. So spread the word, just don't spread the spores!

<http://oldiron.bandcamp.com/>



By Dustin Carroll

Swampheavy are a newer band formed out of long-standing ideas of what it truly means to be heavy. Drummer/vocalist Benny Koslosky and guitarist Cody Lane have been playing in bands together on and off since 2003, but it wasn't until 2010 that the duo set their sights on forming a relentlessly crushing musical project in the vein of heavy-hitters Floor and Black Cobra. A year into the experiment, the group took on the addition of bassist Blake Pickering to give their sound more chest-punching low end. With the trifecta complete, the three black-clad doomsayers created not only a band but a musical genre known as Swampheavy. Named for the fact that if one tried to pick up a swamp, you would find it to be extremely heavy.



The group recently entered Tad Doyle's infamous Witch Ape Studios to begin work on their debut full-length, a meaty slab of sludgy, downtuned eruptions. Doyle built a "Thundercave," a wooden enclosure that enveloped Pickering's towering stack of Sunn gear and captured the crushing low-end in its own isolation booth. Coupled with his own homemade distortion/fuzz pedal, The Submarine, the bass on this record is thunderous and gritty, meant to be felt more than heard, and most definitely at high volumes. Lane's guitar work is

tearing at the same low-frequency stitches, slowly trudging through peaks and valleys of resin-soaked riffage, leading the pace but never far ahead of Koslosky's hammer-thundering rhythms and tortured howls. The band reveals that the kick drum was mic'd up twice, allowing for ample head-room, and the snare three times, creating a shotgun blast snare sound.

After ingesting a fifth of vodka and listening through the scratch recordings, Benny finally got around to writing lyrics to his gurgles and growls that before had been somewhat improvisational. "Surfing on Mermaid's Blood" tells the tale of an epic battle between warring clans of merfolk, ending in their blood staining the seas red - which then prompts Swamp Thing to hang-ten and, well, surf on mermaid's blood. Furthering the swamp themes, "Swamp Emperor" describes Swamp Thing's rise as ruler of all the forested swampland as well as his appreciation for Rainer beer and chewing tobacco.



On another level, "Throat Cherry" describes the biggest bumout in the history of stoners - swallowing a still-burning cherry by accident while inhaling a hit. Everyone's had it happen, and someone needed to write a grooving stoner metal song about it.

The group are aiming for a summer release of the album, but that is tentative. Both Pickering and Lane are engaged to wed their significant others in the near future, so congratulations all around there. In the meantime the group hopes to shop the record around to various labels and see if they can pick up any distribution or touring help. While the typical West Coast jaunt isn't out of the question, Swampheavy have their sites more set on touring in more exotic locations, such as Australia and Europe. They're also hoping to have their new line of merchandise: Swampheavy underwear, completed and available for sale in the near future. Featuring the bands name on the front and "Swamp Ass" on the backside, the product is sure to be a hit with the ladies and the grandparents alike. In the bands own words, "it's very important to remember to swamp it up, swamp it down, and be heavy all around."

<http://swampheavy.tumblr.com/>



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# Local Spotlight

By Brian Kim

If you follow bands in the underground Seattle music scene, there's a pretty good chance you've seen some incredible video work courtesy of Chris Mathews Jr. For years, Mathews has been producing superb quality videos under the name Joonior Studios, showcasing some of the hardest rocking bands in Seattle including Ancient Warlocks, Hobosexual, Monogamy Party, Grenades, and X Suns, just to name a few. With a drummer as a father and watching



live concert footage as a family pastime, Mathews always had a strong interest in music growing up. It was only a matter of time before he had collected a handful of microphones and his brother bought a video camera that the two began working together. While Mathews had been loosely using the misspelled suffix of his name for projects since 2006, it wasn't until an ex-girlfriend told him to focus on a "real career" that he took serious steps in the opposite direction. Being completely self-taught and without having any formal training, each project was and continues to be a personal experiment and an expansion of Mathews' abilities.

Perhaps what is most endearing about Joonior Studios is Mathews' openness towards working with bands on a personal level. Having had many of his inquiries and offers either ignored or flat out rejected by bands' record labels and managers, Mathews now prefers to communicate and work with artists directly. This close-knit relationship with bands and artists puts Mathews right on the forefront of the music scene and ultimately puts him in a closer relationship with those viewing his impressive work.

While most well known for his live performance videos, Mathews is also active in audio production and engineering, repairing or designing audio electronics, as well as music video production. Notable music videos Mathews has produced include Stone Axe's "Chasing Dragons," Grenade's "Dead Air," and most recently, Mos Generator's "Electric Mountain Majesty."

Always in the business of finding new cool things to try, Mathews is currently working on recording a compilation based around a particularly interesting 8-track reel-to-reel console which he recently acquired. There are currently fifteen planned singles that are to be released as a free digital download, and pending finances and interest, possibly on vinyl as well.

Joonior Studios is currently operating largely out a basement in Bothell and Big Sound Productions in North Seattle, as well as any other number of studios depending on the project. You can follow Chris and Joonior Studios on his YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/user/chrimathewsjr](http://www.youtube.com/user/chrimathewsjr) or at his website, [jooniorstudios.tumblr.com](http://jooniorstudios.tumblr.com).

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