

Thee Metal Shakespeare Company



The Bard's Tale

"To be or not to be; Who are we?; That is the question; It matters not; To bleed or not to bleed; For we are metal!" proclaim the members of Portland's **Thee Metal Shakespeare Company**. The merry band of brothers plays power metal based on the works of William Shakespeare. Seriously.

The quartet of minstrels' show includes costumes, Old English and the occasional crowd-pleasing Iron Maiden cover. The band is touring to promote its self-titled "magical disk" on CleanBox Entertainment by means of "a noble steed of steel always traveling at maximum speed and maximum volume," says axeman Viceroy Matthew.

The tunes are playful and the musicianship great. The abundance of guitar solos is easily justified not only as a genre convention but as a musical interpretation of soliloquy. You can't have a good power metal band without a shining singer, and axeman and vocalist Lord Simms can sing an impressive range with crystal clarity.

They're fairly confident that Shakespeare approves of the music but have yet to hear from him. "We're not sure; correspondence has been frighteningly slim. We talked to his PR people, but they're dodgy at best," says drummer William Sly. When questioned about the authorship controversy surrounding the Bard's work, he replies fervently. "This is false – these are lies. There is one Shakespeare, and there will be death, destruction and ruin to all who claim otherwise. There can be none other."

Thee Metal Shakespeare Company heralds itself as "bardcore." Viceroy Matthew explains: "It is more than music to us; it is truly the way we choose to live our lives in an epic and glorious manner, harnessing as much power as possible. We project our sound with magic, alchemy and sonic waves to the audience."

Perhaps best of all, Viceroy Matthew wears a silly hat during performances.

Thee Metal Shakespeare Company, Purple Rhinestone Eagle, Speculative and Harmony Volunteers play at 9 pm, Sunday, June 8, at the Samurai Duck. 21+ show. – Nick DeMarino

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