



Zepparella

The Leading Ladies of Led

Led Zeppelin was always meant to be experienced live. Those mammoth, anthemic riffs; those pummeling, body-quaking rhythms; that heavy-as-Stonehenge groove and the over-the-top sexual swagger – all of it sounds great on record, but Zeppelin was made for the stage. Unfortunately, when most bands take a stab at getting the Led out live, they either come off as stilted and too technical or just plain sloppy. **Zepparella** is that rare beast, though, that can faithfully channel the aggression, the passion and the power that only Page, Plant, Bonham and Jones possessed.

The all-female Zeppelin tribute aren't note-for-note virtuosos, re-creating every Bonham triplet or Page hammer-on, but they're no devil-may-care dilettantes either. The four ladies of Zepparella are experienced disciples of hard rock and heavy metal – the drummer and guitarist played in the AC/DC tribute band AC/DShe and also made up the metal band BOTTOM with the bassist. Their musicianship and chemistry is unmistakable as they gallop out the thundering groove of "Immigrant Song" and surrender themselves to the psychedelic blues of "Dazed and Confused." Singer and stage actress Anna Kristina summons the androgynous strut and pose of Robert Plant and shows how femme-like his banshee wail was to begin with. On the live album *Pleasing Pounding*, Zepparella alternates between the aforementioned classics and some deeper cuts like "Sick Again" and "Trampled Under Foot," and what's most impressive is how the ladies (or Ledies) work within the structure of each song. They take chances, inflating Zeppelin's already expansive sound yet bringing back down to earth the one band that could be truly classified as bigger than big. Zepparella plays with Floater and Slow Children at 6 pm Friday, July 11, at Secret House Vineyards. \$16.50 adv., \$20 door. – *Jeremy Ohmes*

Earnesty

If you're a fan of writer Starhawk (and what sane person wouldn't love it if *Fifth Sacred Thing* could actually work, eh? *Let's defeat the conservative warmongers with invitations to locally produced dinners!*), you'll love Corvallis' **Cassandra Robertson**, who's pretty much like a combo of Ani DiFranco-sounding rhythms with lyrics that could easily have been penned by Starhawk herself. (Checking the liner notes just now, I discovered that indeed, the lyrics to Robertson's song "Hermana's Well" come directly from Starhawk. So.)

Robertson calls her sound "progressive folk-grass" and herself "a conduit for all thing positive." On her new CD, *Impulse to Dream*, Robertson, with her solidly strong voice, conveys lyrics like "Out of the past and into the now / We will succeed when to each we empower" with conviction (even if the grammar doesn't scan, the sentiment shines through). "Angel in the Back" speaks of personal freedom while "Into the Streets" and "Syriana," as you might expect, inspire listeners to activism – the personal is political, indeed. Yes, we cynical ones might roll our eyes at lines like "Let's commit to ourselves; let's be who we are," but Robertson's depth of serious and earnest appeal can't be denied.

Cassandra Robertson plays at 4 pm Saturday, July 12, on the Energy Park Stage at the Oregon Country Fair, and plays a CD release party with some of her backing band at 7 pm Thursday, July 17, at Sahalie Wine Cellars in Corvallis. \$3-\$5. – *Suzi Steffen*



Cassandra Robertson

Tall, Dark and Doomy

There's no such thing as a little bit of doom in metal. Doom music either evokes a sense of dread and despair or it doesn't. Stoner rock can be doomy, but for the most part it doesn't make the listener feel like the world is ending. Without an accompanying apocalyptic atmosphere, you're left with music that makes you feel like the worst thing that could happen is that your dog eats your stash. Which would certainly be bad, but not as bad as, say, the entire planet annihilated in an inferno of death. **The Roller**, a four-piece band from Austin, Texas, combines all the necessary elements to create this deadly vista.

Add to that a little bit of Satanism, or at least a heathen outlook manifested through gravelly, growling vocals typical of black metal, and you've got nearly peerless doom

metal. With more than a passing nod toward doom progenitors Black Sabbath, The Roller has plenty of movement in their music, which never settles into drone territory. The Roller lumbers along, then bursts



into Tony Iommi-sized riffs, which, like on "Rattle of the Shaman," are often interspersed between Melvins-like sludge and head-bobbing bass grooves. One Roller track was written for the second installment

of the IF series, a multimedia project initiated by Austin label Monofonus Press. The project unites writers, visual artists and musicians; in this case, Rebecca Bengal authored a story called "Captioning for the Blind" about "absence and animal carcasses." Painter Virginia Yount created visions of mysterious landscapes to accompany it, and The Roller composed "Zugunruhe," named for the eerie restlessness that animals exhibit when the time of their seasonal migration approaches.

The Roller formed in 2005 and released a demo in 2006. They're currently on tour supporting their June 17 release of a self-titled full-length recording. Happy Bastards, The Roller and Lucika play at 9 pm Tuesday, July 15, at Samurai Duck. 21+ show. \$5. – *Vanessa Salvia*



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