



REVIEW

Accrassicauda

Sunday, July 17 | Black Forest | Photo by Trask Bedortha
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THE BLAST FROM BAGHDAD

Iraqi heavy metal burns up Black Forest

It was shoulder-to-shoulder and thigh-to-thigh with raging strangers in uncomfortably tight quarters – the crowd thrashed and flailed. **Accrassicauda** continues to make history.

On the tail end of their flagship tour, Iraqi metal band Accrassicauda lit up the Black Forest with metal so raucous that ears rang, mosh pits erupted, stage divers writhed and photographers were knocked off balance, left to fend for themselves in a sea of elbows and two-pronged hand salutes.

"This is why we left home, to do this. To get on stage, to burn the stage and melt people," says bassist Firas Al-Lateef, who is full of a jovial enthusiasm that almost makes one forget how intense of a history he and the band have.

Accrassicauda, refugees from a country the U.S. has made war upon, now chase one of the most quintessential American dreams ever – professional musicianship. With more than enough talent to make it happen and a rapidly growing fan base, these boys from Baghdad command a sound that is reminiscent of Metallica's *Black Album*, and they look like something straight out of that time period as well.

Lead vocalist Faisal Talal Mustafa is a lion of the stage, facilitating a dynamic that is masterfully orchestrated chaos. The energy the men of Accrassicauda release upon the audience is war-torn and feral, and witnessing their rise to notoriety is not only noteworthy but also spectacular. They can shred with the best of them. They have impeccable timing and rhythm, with a cohesion that could be felt and heard all the way down 11th Avenue. You come home from their live show with your ears feeling like they've just survived the sound of an indoor shotgun blast.

Seemingly reluctant to be a cultural ambassador, Al-Lateef speaks briefly on the War in Iraq. "War is war, we don't really know what countries do," he says. "We just want to play music. It is a great honor to be able to do this and we want to see how far we can go with it."

It is unknown whether Eugene will see Accrassicauda come through again, because within a year or so you may have to take a drive in order to see them live at the larger venues of bigger cities. For now, they remain on a rocket-propelled trajectory with support from companies such as Peavey, Guitar Center and Yamaha helping to fuel their ordinance. It may only be a brief matter of time before they completely explode upon the American metal scene. – *Dante Zuñiga-West*

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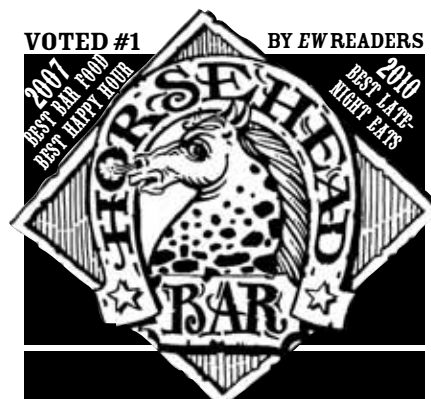


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