

The diary of an axeman

A look into the music of a genius

By: Aaron Mattson
Feature Reporter

Guitar. What word(s) spring to mind when you hear that word? Hendrix, Van Halen or even the unthinkable... DRAGONFORCE. Why is it that someone who has never even picked up a guitar in their life can talk about Jimi Hendrix's stellar performance of the Star-Spangled Banner live at Woodstock or the insane solo of Lynard Skynard's classic, "Freebird". But one legend never stands out. A true guitar hero named Randy Rhoads.

Randall Williams Rhoads was born December 6, 1956 in Santa Monica, California. Randy grew to love guitar, classical guitar in particular, at a young age.

In fact after taking lessons for only one year his teacher confessed he had nothing left to teach him. He

started out in a band called Quiet Riot (besides previous unsuccessful bands including Violet Fox) performing on the Sunset Strip in California. He was quickly noticed for his classical style shredding and pounding pedal toned riffs that eventually landed Quiet Riot a record deal in Japan.

By now you're probably thinking "I've never heard of Quiet Riot or this guy Randy Rhoads" but I guarantee 99.9% of the population of the music-loving world have heard Randy's playing. Ever heard of a guy named John Michael Osbourne? Probably not because he later changed his name to Ozzy Osbourne.

Rhoads hooked up with Osbourne after Ozzy was kicked out of Black Sabbath. But rather than giving up his career he decided to create his own act under his name. He immediately started searching for musicians, a guitarist in particular, and one day Randy came in with a tiny little practice amp and his 1957 White Gibson Custom Les Paul and they just clicked.

Randy wrote many of Ozzy's most famous songs including "Crazy Train", "Suicide Solution" and Randy's shredtastic "Mr. Crowley". In fact Randy is the reason Ozzy got back on his feet and became the metal legend that he is today. Seriously, would "Crazy Train" be the same without that awesome intro riff? I think not. Just listen to either of Ozzy's groundbreaking albums "Blizzard of Ozzy" or "Diary of a Madman".

Really, during that time, Randy was the only shredder out there...well almost, there was one other. Edward Van Halen. Back in the Quiet Riot days, Van Halen and Quiet Riot were the top two bands on the Sunset Strip.

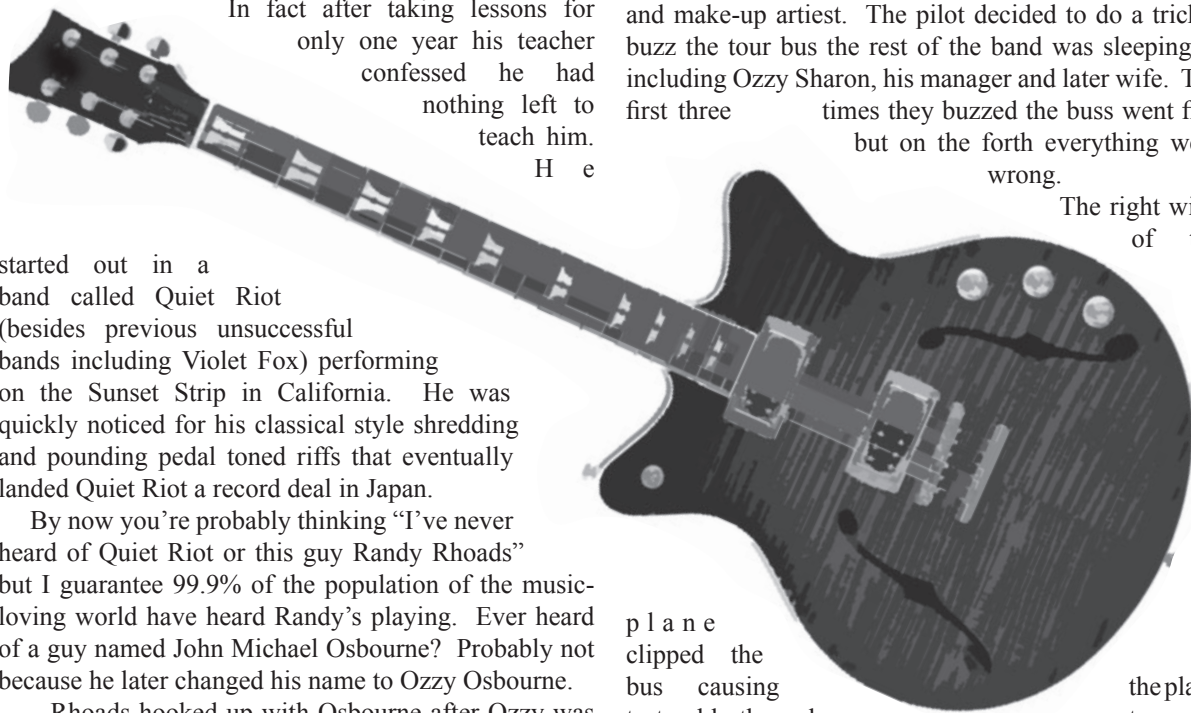
Only one band could get the major record deal in the U.S. and of course history shows Van Halen go it.

But Randy was so much more advanced than Eddie. Like I said above, Randy was known for his Neo-Classical style shredding and his amazing use of the Pentatonic and Aeolian mode scales. Sounds confusing but he was a genius at it and phrasing. Really he was the best out there until one day, the day that resides on March 19, 1982. While on the "Diary of a Madman" tour the band's bus stopped at an airstrip in Florida for a break. The bus driver, which was also a pilot, thought he would impress the band a little bit so he stole a plane out of a nearby hangar and invited Rudy Sarzo, the band's bassist, and the band's manager to go up with him. They did and had an enjoyable ride and came back fine. Next were Randy and Rachel Youngblood, the group's hairdresser and make-up artist. The pilot decided to do a trick a buzz the tour bus the rest of the band was sleeping in including Ozzy Sharon, his manager and later wife. The first three times they buzzed the bus went fine but on the fourth everything went wrong.

The right wing of the

plane clipped the bus causing the plane to tumble through a tree and into a nearby mansion and garage killing all instantly. In a later autopsy the police found traces of cocaine in the pilot's blood, Randy's test came back clean. It was a horrible loss to the music world.

So now I ask you, are Jimi Hendrix and E.V.H. still the true masters of the guitar? Please do yourself a favor and listen to anything off those two albums I stated earlier or listen to the Randy Rhoads "Tribute" album including a live guitar solo by the master himself. He died at the age of 25 and in that time he did what most musicians can't do in 50 years. But above all he was a dedicated and amazing musician and we should all respect him and not all those pretty boys with cool looking guitars. (Actually Randy designed some really cool looking guitars like the Jackson Rhoads V or the Sandoval Polka-Dot Flying V.). Yet everybody seems to have a Hendrix shirt. Don't get me wrong, Hendrix was Ok, but could he double-tap sixteenth note sextuplets with the edge of his pick?



MHS wins rare grant

By: Jaclyn Lundquist
Feature Reporter

Moline is one of five high schools in the U.S. chosen for the Phillips Collection Curriculum grant for history classes to help students learn more about the time period of Jacob Lawrence. The purpose of the grant is to help students experience his art as well as teach others about him.

"Jacob Lawrence is one of the more famous Harlem Renaissance artists," explained history teacher Trent Lamphier.

He and fellow teacher Christina Shelton applied for the grant, which incorporates Lawrence's paintings and documents from the time period.

"Students will be teaching other students about the Great Migration and the Harlem Renaissance through the eyes of those that have experienced it," said Mr. Lamphier.

Mr. Lamphier and Mrs. Shelton have brought their students into this grant. Pictures of the students working and teaching will be sent as part of the grant.

"It's really excellent for us to be recognized at a national level," said Shelton.

This traveling exhibit with seventeen panels is visiting four museums, including Davenport's Figge Museum.

Joy Shopping

Share Joys shopping is just around the corner! The joy of giving a child a gift and making their Holiday season can bring warmth to your heart and joy to your life. It really helps put the Holiday Spirit in all of us.

Shopping can be rewarding to the experienced shopper and frustrating to someone who can't tell a size six from a six-x. Not everyone is prepared to choose a 2T snowsuit or identifying a coordinating slacks and sweater.

But when the shopping is finished and the presents are wrapped, students face their most challenging task - delivering the gifts. Not every delivery is easy. Some families have to move and don't leave forwarding addresses.

Others may not even have a home. Mrs. Blackall mentioned meeting a family at a parked car to deliver the clothes. Mark Thomas went to a house to drop off some clothes and noticed that there was a For Sale sign in the yard and no one was home. Mark was able to get the clothes to the family by taking the gifts to the grade school.

Another group of girls drove around endlessly looking for an address. Once Mrs. Blackall told them to call the family, the wrong address was easily corrected, and the girls realized that they had already driven by the house several times.

Gift shopping and giving is an amazing feeling because you can feel as if you helped make a difference in someone's life and holiday season.