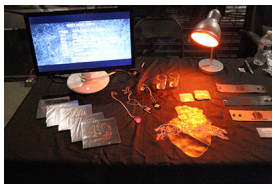
Black Heart Saints include Gallup date for west coast winter tour

Written by By Rick Abasta Sun Correspondent
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Rock and roll is alive and well today and his name is Black Heart Saints.

Black Heart Saints stopped in Gallup for a show at Juggernaut Music on Jan. 31. The Austin, TX quartet was wrapping up a west coast winter tour when they stopped in town for their only New Mexico date.

Lead vocalist Josh Ross said the group has been together for about four years after their first live performance at the prestigious South By Southwest.

“We’ve just been kicking butt since then,” Ross said. “We are wrapping up a tour and we’ve been on the road for about a week-and-a-half. We’ll regroup in Austin and begin planning for the next tour.”

The band features the classic rock sheen and a commanding stage performance.

“We’re classic rock meets more modern stuff like Guns N Roses and Led Zeppelin. We’re the classic four-piece with vocals, guitar, bass and drums,” he said. “Put those ingredients together and you have loud rock and roll.”

The band is still paying dues and Ross knows they will be playing for audiences of varying size, including small ones, before it’s all over and done.

“Whether there’s one person or 1,000 people … everyone’s putting their time into it, investing their time and money,” he said. “I think that’s very important. You have to cherish that and always put on the best show you can,” he said.

The band played “Touch The Sky,” “Gasoline” and “All Night Long” off their debut album, “Alive,” which was released in July 2017.

Ernie Santiago, owner of Juggernaut Music, said the all-ages venue is going to continue hosting national acts like the Black Heart Saints for 2018. Local musicians will also be featured.

“We are going to try and feature local musicians at least twice a month. We support the local music scene and we encourage people to come out to the shows,” Santiago said.

He said the business has opened a recording studio as well and the plans are underway for music production and distribution.

The Black Heart Saints were travelling from the west coast in a 15-passenger van that had the two back seats removed for equipment storage.

“We’re tired. We’re beat up. But that shouldn’t stop us from putting on a great show and giving the people what they want,” Ross said.

His wailing vocals and serpentine movements a la Axl Rose certainly didn’t show any signs of fatigue during the band’s Gallup show.

Austin has become the capital of music in Texas, if the success of SXSW and Austin City Limits is any indication.

“(The scene) is strong, it’s steadily growing. There’s a lot of competition out there, which is good. It makes you hungry,” Ross said.

He said competition leads to personal introspection and challenging each other in the studio, practice space and during live performances.

“That should only motivate us. It’s good competition. It makes everyone a little bit better and I love being in Austin and having that,” he said.

Covers of “Come Together” by the Beatles and “Rock And Roll” by Led Zeppelin was well received by the Gallup crowd before Black Heart Saints packed up their gear and headed east on Route 66, bound for Texas.

Information: www.blackheartsaints.com

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