Underbelly Bender Music Series

It's a tribute - a tribute to all those relatively unknown dive bars scattered throughout Portland that ignite a deep passion for music in many young bands and artists. And this tribute is called the "Underbelly Bender." "Nearly every one of my all-time favorite live shows happened in a dive bar...But the truth beyond the potency of those unfettered shows [are] those lovely dim and dirty birthing places for bands," says Bim Ditson, organizer of the Underbelly Bender and drummer for the up-and-coming band And And And. Ditson says that he wants to give those forgotten places the exposure he feels they deserve. And the Bender was also a great way for him to connect with other bands involved in the local music scene.

He wants to connect with the bands in Portland who aren't taking the "typical press route" - those bands that are playing for the sake of music alone.

Kimo's on Polk Street, a long-time rock music venue in the Bay Area, will be shutting its doors as ownership changes hands this month. After 34 years serving San Francisco's music community, the venue's new owners have immediate plans to keep the joint rocking. "My gut feeling is that they're going to make it into a cocktail lounge," says owner Tony Maleon. With a crackdown on no new liquor licenses in the area, Maleon was left with few other options than to sell.

Kimo's has been host to countless local, regional, and national acts over the years, including a surprise appearance in 2002 by Metallica. Prior to its rock and roll glory days, the space served as a local gay bar and transitioned into hosting more rock shows as the AIDS epidemic moved the LGBT scene towards the Castro.

"From the tranny sitting at the end of the bar, to a hustler on the corner, to rock' n' roll playing upstairs, for me that was a big definition of San Francisco," Maleon says.

A true San Francisco icon, Kimo's will be missed.

Terri Winston, founder of Women's Audio Mission (WAM), didn't originally set out to be the production side of the music industry. Just out of college, she got a record deal and started her professional career as a recording artist. Due in part to her degree in electrical engineering, however, Winston became more comfortable on the other side of the mic. "It became obvious to me," she says, "that the combination of engineering and musical chops worked really well for me in studio production."

Unfortunately, this kismet combination of opportunity and skill is pretty rare for most women. In fact, women make up less than 5% of opportunity and skill is pretty rare for most women. "In 2003, Winston founded Women's Audio Mission to help remedy this gender imbalance. With an online community of 800 members across the globe, WAM's brick and mortar studio in San Francisco serves as headquarters for on-site training, educational programs and recording sessions run entirely by women for women. With an online community of 800 members, the non-profit has reached over 5,000 people in 105 countries. WAM is the only organization in the world that is providing this kind of specialized training for women, and is recognized widely for setting standards in music recording arts. With such far-reaching resources - and with a membership fee of only $40 - women can now easily and affordably take advantage of world-class training and professional know-how right in the Bay Area."