

Macefield Music Festival 2015: Day 1 Recap

Tuesday, October 6 2015, 11:17 AM



Macefield Music Festival 2015: Day 1 Recap

Posted by Nada Staff October 3rd, 2015 No Comments »

Macefield Music Festival Day 1 Recap

October 1, 2015

By Gemma Alexander

Edith Macefield became a local hero and a symbol of Old Ballard in 2006 when she refused to sell her house to developers. [Macefield Music Festival](#), launched in 2013, honors her memory.

It might seem incongruous memorialize Old Ballard with a music festival held along a street now lined with hipster bars and trendy restaurants, but Old Ballard has always had more going on than was apparent on the surface. Edith was a touring musician in her day.

Friday night found me bouncing between three of the neighborhood's oldest and best-loved venues: [Conor Byrne](#) hosted folk and singer-songwriters, [The Sunset](#) featured ironic rock and metal, and The Tractor housed everything else.

While some people were still at the office, [Radio Raheem](#) launched the festival at the Tractor. They were playing to fewer than a dozen people, most of them press, but they weren't holding anything back. These days, "dance music" usually means electronic beats, but Radio Raheem is dance music with a heartbeat.

[Hexengeist](#) hit the Sunset stage with a lot of hair and hooky thrash riffs. After a couple instrumental numbers I was starting to wonder why they even had microphones when a chick standing in front of the stage picked one up and started howling. Introductions like, "This song is about when you go out with a guy and he turns out to be a werewolf. And you get knocked up," clue you in that Hexengeist's metal is ironic, but the execution is as precise as the genre demands.



Hexengeist. Photo by Jim Toohey.

Twenty years of Saturday mornings with Kid Hops have failed to convert me into a reggae fan, but one [Wet City Rocker](#) set at Doe Bay established an exception. I can't put my finger on why the group's music feels so danceable when other reggae bands inspire a nap – more technical guitars? more layered music? faster tempo? Whatever is different, there is no denying they generate energy.

Luxurious hour-long set times give fans time to really get into performances by their favorite bands, and give everyone else enough time to sample bands on different stages. Shifting venues mid-set had worked pretty well for me so far, but around this time the schedule started to fall apart. It's normal for festivals to run behind time, but this was the first time I've been to a festival that got ahead of itself. I showed up at Conor Byrne expecting to hear 20 minutes of Scott Yoder, but he was finishing up his last song as I came in. I waited around for [Shannon Stephens](#), who sounds like Nashville if country music hadn't taken a wrong turn somewhere late in the last century. Her warm voice over acoustic-electric guitar and stand-up bass turned Ballard Avenue into a cozy living room full of friends.

I popped back across the street to the Tractor for the end of [Gifted Gab's](#) set, only to find the fabulous Gab hanging out in front of the building, set completed. Oh well, [Fox and the Law](#) was taking the stage and good thing I didn't miss it, since they don't have anything else scheduled for the foreseeable – ever? With a sound that's part punk, part metal, the end result is fucking rock and roll. Don't think about it too much, just grab another beer and have a good time.

Drawn by promises on social media of an actual toilet on stage, I slipped into the capacity crowd for the tail end of [Full Toilet](#) at the Sunset. There was a toilet, and someone onstage was wearing chainmail, and that is probably enough information to give you an idea of what it sounded like. Obnoxious punk fun. [Gaytheist](#) from Portland followed up with more loud, fast, and heavy music with a sense of humor.



Full Toilet. Photo by Jim Toohey.

Then it was back down to The Tractor for [Thunderpussy](#). I always liked the idea of Riot Grrls, but I could never dig the music. Thanks to Thunderpussy, I can finally get my fix of wry, sex-positive feminist music properly paired with heavy riffs and hot licks. I already loved half of this quartet; one of Whitney Petty's broken drumsticks from a Grizzled Mighty show is a treasured item in my household, and Lena Simon's Kairos project should be as famous as her band La Luz. Pair those two with Leah Julius' drums and Molly Sides' killer showmanship and it's a wonder the walls didn't come down.

There are still two days of Macefield Music Festival left, with five stages on Saturday and Sunday, and a killer lineup yet to come. If you missed Friday night, you missed out. But it's not too late to have a good time. Check out the [rest of the lineup](#) and see for yourself.

NadaMucho.com Contributor Gemma Alexander has written for [ParentMap magazine](#), [Three Imaginary Girls](#) and the [KEXP blog](#)

Check out more pictures of Macefield 2015 night 1 on our [Flickr page](#). Follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) for real time updates throughout the weekend.

Share this:

Facebook 15 Twitter 6 Google Pinterest Email Print More

Leave a Reply

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Name *

Email *

Website

Comment

Notify me of follow-up comments by email.

Notify me of new posts by email.