



Randy Lintz, Jerry Coleman and Todd Baumgartner of BlackWater Ryzn perform at Virginia Street Brewhouse.
PHOTO/JERI CHADWELL

In full flow

BlackWater Ryzn

Todd Baumgartner started his latest band about two and half years ago. As a lifelong musician and longtime metalhead, he knew exactly what he was looking for—a group of musicians with whom he could create original music in the vein he loves.

Vocalist Baumgartner had the guitarist he wanted in friend Randy Lintz, and, from there, the two set out to recruit a full complement for their new outfit, BlackWater Ryzn. Rather than seeking a bassist and drummer from their shared pool of musical acquaintances, they turned to Craigslist.

“There’s a lot of guys in town, but, you know, I wanted something different,” Baumgartner said. “I didn’t want the same old guys who’ve been playing together for 20 years and know each other. Randy, when we were looking for a bass player, didn’t list the name of the band.”

After a few personnel changes over the last several years, the band has settled into a regular lineup—comprised of Baumgartner and Lintz accompanied by bassist Scott Dasnielt and drummer Jerry Coleman—and started producing original music that sounds like it might have come out of heyday of hair metal.

“We’re all children of the ’80s,” said Lintz.

“We just don’t have any hair anymore,” Coleman added.

But the band does draw heavily on the era’s influence still.

“I was in hair bands back in the ’80s—and I get my melodies from there and stuff, but we want heavy guitars, heavy riffs,” Baumgartner explained. “I would say a band called Dokken and a band called Flame that I was in back in the day. I was the background singer for them. And then Dio was amazing. ... Chris Cornell from Soundgarden. Those singers were my favorites.”

Coleman, who said the band’s songs also incorporate catchier elements of rock and pop, calls BlackWater Ryzn’s sound “arena rock”—and the band has begun playing Reno’s bigger venues. On April 12, BlackWater Ryzn opened for early ’90s Southern metal sensation Jackyl at Virginia Street Brewhouse. On April 20, the band will play Cargo Concert Hall. The bandmates are also working on the release of a debut album.

“We’re on MeloSonic Records ... and it’s a new label,” Baumgartner said. “It’s a friend of mine I’ve known for 34 years. He was our sound guy back in the ’80s. He went to engineering school in L.A., and he’s been there for 25 years. He’s got a lot of connections, and he’s got his own whole studio.”

While BlackWater Ryzn occasionally plays fan-favorite covers from decades past, the bandmates said they’re excited to be carrying on the metal tradition with new originals that speak to their older style.

“That was the good music back then for everybody,” Dasnielt said. “It was easy. It was good—I mean, good, strong vibes.”

“That’s the key thing,” Coleman said. “Good music stands the test of time.”

“A lot of musicians—I know a lot of guys who just live to learn other people’s music,” Lintz added. “It’s their musical high. ... And then there are other people, and I’d throw myself in that camp, where you sit down, you pick up the guitar, and you just start playing and see what comes out. ... That’s the key, I think. ... recognizing that an original band has to have a product. You’ve got to get music recorded, and people have to be able to listen to it.”

“It’s the crack method,” Dasnielt quipped. “You’ve got to give it away before you sell it. But they’ve got to have it to see that it’s something they want.”

The bandmates of BlackWater Ryzn expect to release their first album this summer. □

BlackWater Ryzn will play at Cargo Concert Hall, 255 N. Virginia St., at 8 p.m. on April 20. Learn more here: bit.ly/2Gfvv4i.

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