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**ARTIST OF THE WEEK: The Madeira**  
Story by [Ryan Williams](#) - Photos by [Submitted Photo](#) -

Jan. 27th @ The Melody Inn

Listen:  
<http://www.surguitar101.com/TheMadeira/music/Madeira-Sandstorm.mp3>

IndianapolisMusic.net presents the Artist of the Week. Each week our editorial staff will select one local artist who has made a place in the spotlight for themselves by giving Indy's music lovers something they should be hearing. Along with the weekly IMN feature, the Artist of the Week will also be featured

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in the pages of NUVO Newsweekly.

The sound of a twangy lead guitar is inseparable from surf rock. It's a sound that The Madeira's lead guitarist has been following since a young age. Ivan Pongracic says "I started when I was 13. My dad used to be a semi-pro musician so I grew up with him playing the guitar. It was around the time I fell in love with The Shadows, a British sixties instrumental band, really big everywhere but the USA, and eventually wanted to play just like Hank Marvin, their lead guitarist. Given that I spent the last five years playing in Shadows tribute band The Troubadours with my dad on rhythm guitar, I guess things haven't changed much for me!"

Despite that devotion, Pongracic remained devoted to surf rock. "A lot of people think of surf music as something a bit cheesy and old-fashioned – like the Beach Boys, Gidget and Wipe Out. That's completely wrong. True instrumental surf music is dark, fast, exotic and about as contemporary as it gets. It is the original indie/punk music, as most sixties surf bands self-released their singles and albums, played loud and fast, and didn't give a damn about the charts." It's that dark and exotic sound that The Madeira captures on "Sandstorm!", their latest CD release on Seattle's Double Crown Records. The band merges a Mediterranean feel with traditional surf sounds to form their unique sound.

Pongracic is joined by rhythm guitarist Patrick O'Connor, bassist Todd Fortier, and drummer Dane Carter. He says the band came together out of the players involved in The Troubadours. "I was really itching to play some original, powerful surf music again, and asked (Dane and the band's old bassist) if they would be into it. They agreed, but we still needed a fourth member. I knew Patrick since '99, and it occurred to me that since Destination: Earth! had slowed down he might want to join another surf band, a more traditional one. I emailed him, and he said yes! So, the Madeira was born. That was in the Winter of '04, and we had our first show in June of that year. Our original bass player had to quit due to family obligations, and we brought Todd in last spring. It's a hell of a band! It's simply a thrill to play with these three people, as they're all monster musicians as well as being super-cool and nice human beings. I'd been looking for this band for the last 20 years!"

With the lineup solidified, The Madeira began playing throughout the surf rock subculture. "There are hundreds of incredible surf bands all over the world today, and though most are under the radar, they are creating some exciting and vital music, music that is built on the sixties foundations but that exhibits each band's personality and character and is most definitely as NOW as it gets. And some of the best ones are from outside the US. All the bands are very supportive of each other, and help line up the gigs for the out-of-town surf bands, etc. It's a closely knit community, and it's full of incredible talent as well as intensely dedicated fans." Pongracic recommends [Surf Guitar 101](#) as a good place to get started.

The Madeira is hoping to do a lot of work this year, according to Pongracic. "We're working on a summer tour of California. Hopefully we'll also do a short tour of Europe at some point, though not this year." He notes that the band is not a full-time concern, but it's a welcome outlet and release. They were to celebrate the release of their new CD at the Melody Inn Friday, January 27th at the Melody Inn, although they'll be unable to play after Carter broke his arm in a biking accident. Instead, O'Connor's well-known local surf band Destination: Earth! will play, along with The Breakers and Hyperdrive, Go!

-- [Ryan Williams](#) --

Related Link: <http://www.surfguitar101.com/TheMadeira/>

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