

SEPTEMBER 26TH, 2024

VOL 9



# THE AETHER ENTERTAINER

## HUSKY BY THE GEEK

A TRIP TO  
EORZEA CAFE  
OSAKA

MEET  
THE QUEENS  
OF METAL

EXPLORING  
EORZEA'S  
DANCE TROUPES



+ WE'RE TALK'N *Tacos* FROM TURAL TO THANALAN

THE AETHER ENTERTAINER

# September

2024



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# OCTOBER EVENT CALENDAR



# 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		Hallow Haven 1 Oct 1- Nov 1 	2	3	JJ Disney Karaoke 4 	A New World Orchestra Cincinnati, OH 5 
A Feast Reborn 6 Oct 5-Oct 6 	7	8	9	10	PAX AUS 2024 Oct 11- Oct 13 	GATEway Fate 12 Oct 12- Oct 13 
13	14	15	16	Gamescom Asia Oct 17-Oct 20 	JERRY. Live Bard Mewsical 18 	Shijuku District Zombie Walk Oct 18- Oct 19 
20	21	22	23	24	Blue Migo'te Spook Fest Concert 25 	26
27	28	29	30	AE Cafe: Dia de los Muertos 31 DAY OF THE DEAD CANDLE LIT POETRY Dia De Los Muertos 		

WANT TO ADD YOUR EVENT TO NEXT MONTH'S CALENDAR?

[CLICK HERE](#)

 IN REAL LIFE

 ONLINE

A JUST JUICE X EDEON VAILS ORIGINAL SHOW



Finale  
**Sept 29th**

FINAL FANTASY XIV  
ONLINE

MATERIA



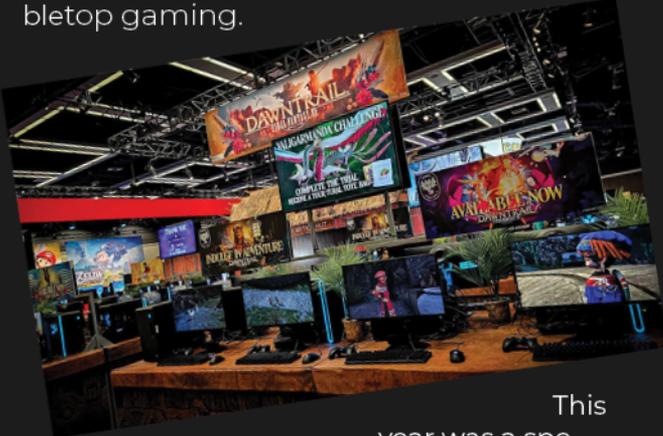
streamed on [twitch.tv/juicyXIV](https://www.twitch.tv/juicyXIV)



# 20 YEARS PAX 2014

It's that time of year again where industry folk and gamer nerds alike gather in the heart of Seattle, Washington for PAX West, a convention hub for discovering the latest and greatest in PC, console, and tabletop gaming.

ences, game demo for Final Fantasy XIV as a whole, the booth this year also featured a Tural-themed photobooth, merchandise shop, and a display by Hyte showing off the two themed PC cases featured in their giveaway. Looking pretty snazzy if I do say so myself, so I hope you all managed to enter! This year's PAX also contained a panel hosted by Odagiri Kei, the lead UI designer for FFXIV, where he spoke on behind-the-scenes aspects of tailoring the player experience; watch it [here!](#)



This year was a special one for Final Fantasy XIV, as Square Enix had a booth promoting the new Dawntrail expansion pack front and center in the main exhibit hall. Congoers were invited to challenge themselves to defeat Valigarmanda in Worqor Lar Dor, one of the new trials released alongside the main scenario quest of Dawntrail. Mentors and sprouts alike stepped up to the challenge to defeat the boss, affectionately nicknamed 'noodle bird' by the community due to its half-snake, half-bird appearance. The prize?



Unfortunately, no in-game perks, but bragging rights and a canvas tote bag featuring the beloved Turali Taco were granted to the successful. As for the unsuccessful... well, there was no such thing. Participants were permitted to keep attempting until they cleared the raid. Unfortunately, due to this, the line for the event got backed up quite a bit, but fans did what fans will do - wait it out.

Back outside the exhibit booth, we were able to speak to a couple of players and asked them a few questions regarding their experience.



Q: Hey there! I'm Aki from the Aether Entertainer. Do you have a moment to answer some questions?

Mikan: Sure thing!

Q: Awesome. How did you like the booth this year?

Mikan: It's great to see so many people coming together for the game. I cleared the main story recently, so this fight is still fresh in my mind.

Lathie: I can't say the same; I'm not completely caught up yet. This was a nice sneak peek for me to see what's to come though.

Q: Are you guys familiar with this type of gameplay?

Lathie: I'm more or less retired from raiding, but I love blind proggng fights.

Mikan: I would say it had just enough new things to make it enjoyable. Can't wait to try out the extreme version!

Q: What do you have to say to the people playing for the first time today?

Mikan: Hang in there through A Realm Reborn! The story starts slow for sure, but everything that comes after it is worth it! There's so much more than this!



- Safira



# X-TROUPE

X-Troupe's journey began earlier this year, when its founder Sadicia Hawke, an aspiring bard, decided to try out a new style of in-game dancing. From its conception, X-Troupe's goal was to support bards and the barding community. Adopting a Vegas-style Can-Can aesthetic, Sadicia experimented with solo performances, gradually evolving into a more sophisticated act and eventually adopting the name "Dance Troupe G". Over time, her troupe grew from humble beginnings into an eclectic group that now boasts a diverse and growing roster of 12 members. This roster, which is now referred to as X-Troupe, includes not only dancers but also tarot readers, photographers, models, and bard bands, reflecting the troupe's transformation into a full-fledged traveling circus. X-Troupe's performances are regarded as notable for their unique unpredictability and audience interaction. The troupe's shows often feature humorous and unconventional elements, such as impromptu pole dancing or crowd participation stunts.

One of the most striking aspects of X-Troupe is its commitment to manual dancing, setting it apart from other performance groups that mainly rely on macros. X-Troupe's intricate and spontaneous approach involves controlling multiple dancers across various devices, relying purely on

musical intuition rather than pre-programmed routines.

However, despite their innovative approach, X-Troupe faced significant challenges early on. In the beginning the troupe was met with resistance from the barding community. Their unorthodox style and flashy performances were not well-received by all. Perseverance and a dedicated base of early fans helped X-Troupe overcome these obstacles. Today, they have not only integrated into the barding community but have also cultivated a unique following of their own, characterized by high energy and wild antics. They've become a cherished asset to the music community and a well-loved staple for many venues, including our own AE Cafe.

## Interview with Sadicia Hake, founder of X-Troupe.

**X-troupe is known for its unique approach to dance in FFXIV. Can you tell us a bit about your background in the game and what inspired you to start X-Troupe?**

I first started playing FFXIV back in February 2024. The first bard band that I saw was "**Gaenen's World**" having a pop up in Limsa Lominsa. I was so blown away. I knew that barding was

what I wanted to do. But I failed miserably at making music. Even as a soloist, I just couldn't figure out the MIDI's. I defeated and decided to just follow Geanen's World around like a groupie. I would solo dance just for fun until I got a costume and my first alt. I decided to make the pair look and act like "Vegas style Can-Can dancers". I was really lame at first, we just did the

Beesknees... But over time I grew into what we are today!

**How many members are currently active in the troupe? How do you go about recruiting new members? Are there strict requirements for joining?**



We currently have 12 members in our troupe, 5 of which are dancers. We also have tarot readers, photography, companions, models, bards, dancers, and even hype personalities! We are growing into a real "festival of fools". It's not hard to join; you just have to be passionate about entertainment and click with our chemistry!

**Do you rehearse for X-troupe performances? How do you practice and refine your routines?**

We don't really have any rehearsals. I know most of the music and I've memorized my key combinations. I control 4 dancers on 4 different keyboards. 82 keys with 7 hotbar overlays and 9 job switches. It's all manual dancing; no macros or automation. It took a while to develop and remember; but now I can dance the troupe to any song, any time, anywhere. Simply from feeling the music. It's a very organic dance process for me.

**What were some of the challenges you've faced when starting X-Troupe, especially given that you weren't initially welcomed by the barding community?**

We were considered very radical at first. We actually got shunned out of the community in many places. We were too loud, too flashy, and too lewd with our outfits. We drew too much attention and many venues did not like that at first. I felt outcast for months and actually wanted to give up and quit the game entirely. My world got really dark and lonely. It hurt inside. But my friends and fans told me to keep at it...to push harder. So we did! Now we've built our own rowdy community of misfits. Over time, our popularity has grown and we were able to make a full and strong comeback. Now I'm close friends with some of the people that pushed me away in the beginning and I feel very deeply connected and accepted in the barding community today!

**Can you share any particularly funny or challenging moments that happened during a performance?**

Oh boy! Let's see...I jumped out of a cake and did some pole dancing for a birthday party. I have instigated an RP crowd getting high off home depot chemicals. We have had people sneak up on stage to "harass" band members and dancers (all in a fun and friendly way of course)! Sometimes our shows go off the rails. I'll admit... maybe I have a hand at provoking this. But it's all in the name of entertainment and inclusion! I love involving the community beyond the cookie cutter expectations, so sometimes I'll pull people on stage just to dance with me right up front.

**Looking ahead, what are your goals for X-troupe? Are there any new projects or directions you're excited about exploring?**

I will keep experimenting and pushing my dancing to the limits. I'm looking for anything I can find to bring more energy, entertainment, and excitement to the crowds! We are also working on a "Big Top Circus" show; a whole renaissance festival with mystics, a parade, games, and of course lots of music and dancing! It's always been a dream of mine to bring gypsy and vegas style entertainment to the community.

<https://discord.gg/RR0QYSTONX> 

# Queens of Metal

By Scarlett Vendetta & Josiff Cujoh

**Your band is made up of 4 different people. How did you meet and when did you all decide to form a band?**

**OCTAVIA:** Originally, the "band" started out as just me and Wren. They showed me how to set all that jazz up with toneshifting with BMP (Bard Midi Player), and afterwards we started to play together.

**WREN:** I met Octavia one night at a venue called the Monochrome Maiden. After showing her how to set up [BMP], the song she played changed like night and day. Eventually we both would duo at that venue, soon joined by Eltana and then Rowan.



**ELTANA:** I was at the Monochrome Maiden venue and heard Octavia on stage playing some of my songs. I met Wren, Rowan and the other MM bards, and we'd get together every weekend with the biggest ensemble we could possibly run, syncing manually, adjusting speeds mid-song, sometimes with hilarious and disastrous results.

**ROWAN:** So, I started my barding career playing solo on the streets of Ul'dah, playing stuff made by Eltana and Wren. I was jamming one day, when Octavia showed up and started messaging me. They were the bard manager at the Monochrome Maiden, and they invited me to come play on stage there.

**Can you discuss the logistics of running Holmgang? Do you have a leader? How do you handle bookings and coordinate the band?**

**ELTANA:** Usually Wren is coordinating the start/sync of each song. Octavia and I tend to be the ones talking to the audience the most, but all of us improvise as the mood stri-

kes. Song choices are made by all of us and we're usually discussing changes as we play.

**WREN:** Mostly we just go out to gigs we get invited to do and on occasion we will play pop up gigs at starter cities like Limsa. Eltana and Octavia handle getting gigs for the band and the social parts. Rowan helps out with their own music edits and gives us ideas on what songs to work on next.

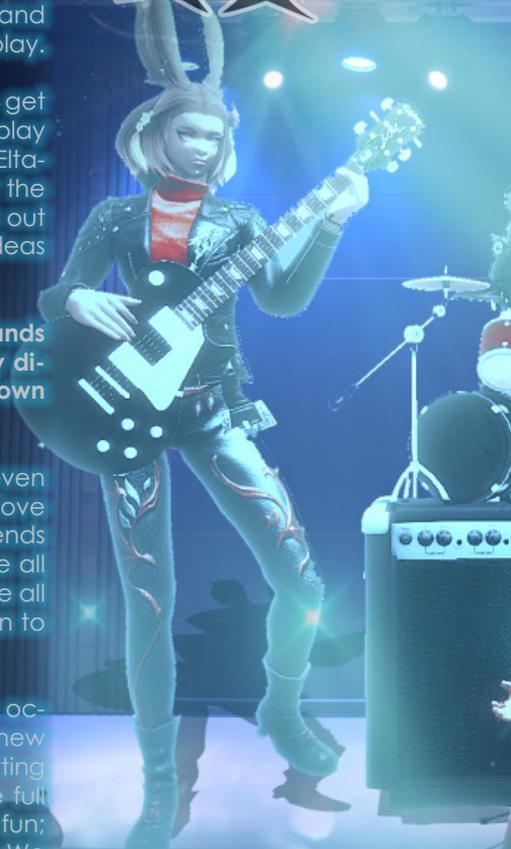
**Your members also run their own bands outside of Holmgang. Are there any key differences when you perform with your own band versus with the group?**

**ROWAN:** I can say there's nothing that even compares to playing with Holmgang. I love these people, they're some great friends and even greater mentors to me. We've all brought tracks to our discography, we've all contributed, so really, it just comes down to how the venue is vibing with our stuff.

**ELTANA:** Most of my time playing as an octet solo is spent in some town testing new edits, taking notes and chatting with people. Events with the full band are always the most fun; of us, the better! We feed off each other's energy and it always leads to a more dynamic show.

**WREN:** I run my own octet troupe called The Darkclouds. Also, I do compete from time to time on Eorzea's Got Talent. As for collabs, we get ideas from all the members and see if we can get some edits going on. We love to find deep obscure tracks from bands out there.

**Can you talk about how the**



# FFXIV HOLMGANG

**members of Holmgang collaborate on songs? How do you decide on which songs to play in a set?**

**ROWAN:** We kinda play it by ear based on where we're playing. We have one song that is a MUST PLAY at every show, kinda our band's signature song. We have a whole bit with it and everything, and anyone who knows us knows which song that is.

**ELTANA:** We usually make new songs on our own, then bring them to the band to play and give feedback at our weekly XFC show. Over time, they get refined into finished versions and added to setlists. The nice thing about having four of us is that we can fill gaps in each other's knowledge and experience.

**What in-game or IRL musical inspirations do you draw from?**

**ROWAN:** When I'm doing songs, it's usually because I really like the song, and want us to play it onstage sometime. So, most of my songs are things from other games I play. Things like Helldivers, Cyberpunk, hell, even Call of Duty Zombies.

**OCTAVIA:** I'm a huge metalhead who's very in touch with my own local metal scene irl. My own dream is to eventually be in a metal band irl, and I'm pretty much living my own dream in ffxiv. I like to think I bring the more black metal, folk metal, and death metal inspirations to the band.

If you could play only one last song with Holmgang, which song would you choose to send us off with?

**WREN:** It would probably be Through The Fire And Flames from Dragonforce. Just the intensity of that song when we play it is the reason why we play as Holmgang. Go big or go home!

**ELTANA:** Probably Ghost Love Score by Nightwish. I guess it's a selfish pick, I just really love it!

**OCTAVIA:** If Holmgang was to go out with a bang one day, I would hope our final song would be Eltana's Final Fantasy Boss Rush. It was our big Quartet song, one that even made it to an Octet eventually. It holds a very special place in my heart.



**ROWAN:** Holmgang has one song we call our theme, or um... signature song. F\*cked with a n Anchor, by Alestorm. We have our own little bit with the song where, about halfway through, we all curse in the middle of the song.

\_\_\_\_\_ is most likely to \_\_\_\_\_ during a show.

**ROWAN:** Gods... I know what everyone else is gonna write already... Rowan is most likely to mistype during a show. BUT! Octavia is most likely to zone out during a show.

**ELTANA:** Rowan is most likely to mischat and play random notes during a show.

**OCTAVIA:** Rowan is most likely to get caught typing when we go to start playing. Eltana will usually be the tallest in the group. Wren and the Darkclouds in the front will blast our ears with a perfect sync cheer.

**WREN:** Octavia is most likely to test drums between songs during a show. Rowan will play in the key of R from time to time. Eltana will try to bring a lalafell alt to fit in the band formation.

**What is the most fond memory you have while playing with the band?**

**ELTANA:** The Octafuck. We have a certain song about an anchor, and everyone in the know shouts a nice big "FUCK YOU" when the line comes up. So you have people unaware, dancing the night away or maybe just walking into the venue, and 15 people shout obscenities out of nowhere. The resulting chaos is glorious!

**WREN:** Every show has a good memory, but I would say recently at The Foundry re-opening. The energy of the crowd as we played songs that night was just epic. Also, the fact we opened up the pit to Raining Blood by Slayer was the perfect way to end our set.

**ROWAN:** I think my most fond memory would have to be maybe one of our first shows in front of a HUGE audience. We were playing a block party in the Brimming Heart, and we had ourselves stood on these benches in the middle. And there were just... so many people, they wouldn't even render, and it was just... crazy to me.



The music of the Final Fantasy franchise is arguably as iconic as the worlds, characters, and adventures that make up each entry. There's no shortage of choice when it comes to individuals paying homage to the franchise's legendary tunes across the internet, but few understand the impact of the games' music better than classically-trained virtuoso Husky by the Geek. Closing in on 100,000 YouTube subscribers as of the writing of this article, Husky's covers of Final Fantasy and other video game music are a force to be reckoned with, and we at the Aether Entertainer were fortunate enough to get to ask him a few questions. So come along as we get an inside look at Husky's musical journey, his creative process, and the origins of that iconic Husky hat.



## **Interview with Husky by the Geek**

**Can you tell our readers a little about yourself? And what is a fun fact about yourself that makes you unique from other musicians and content creators within the FFXIV community?**

I'm a composer, and I'm mostly known for my FFXIV covers on Youtube. I also cover other games, and I do commissions for writing either rock or orchestral music for streamers, and indie video game developers. I wear a husky hat in my videos. Before starting my channel, I used to wear it on my summer evenings on the beach while playing guitar, and people only recognized me as soon as I put it on my head. So I made it my signature move on Youtube, haha. I'm also crazy & passionate enough to do giant medleys with hundreds of musicians.

**What genres do you cover and are there any that you enjoy more particularly? Do you have a role model or mentor?**

I cover all sorts of FFXIV music. I especially have fun turning an orchestral song into a rock/metal cover. Honestly I just take my guitar and magic happens, I've got tons of ideas every time. Especially with Soken's music, it inspires me a lot.

**What is your favorite soundtrack from FFXIV?**

I love all soundtrack albums equally because there are a lot of bangers everywhere, so I'd say my 3 favorite songs are Wayward Daughter (Tsukuyomi), Spiral (from Coil of Bahamut) and Close in the Distance.

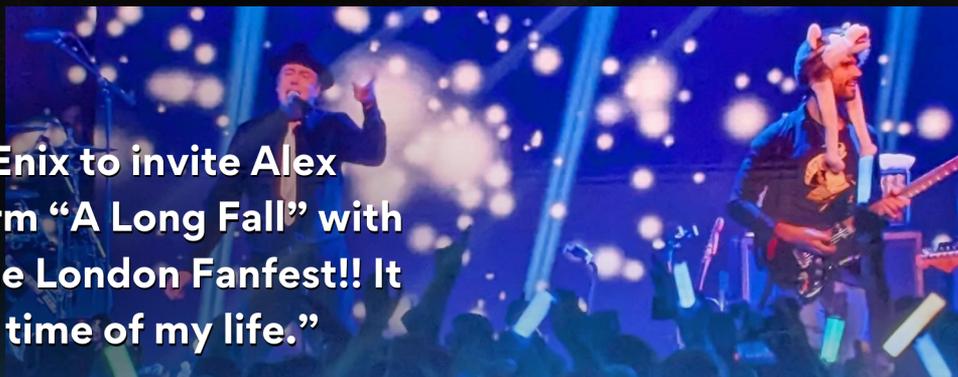
**How would you gauge your growth or if you have improved? What steps do you take to improve yourself and your skills?**

I have evolved a lot in the last few years when I started to make orchestral music. My understanding of music is better, and it showed in my last FFXIV medleys with 200 and 300 musicians, where I rearranged some previous covers of mine at a larger scale by including orchestra. I just improve naturally by continuing to create music, and sometimes watch tutorials to understand things better, mixing and production wise.

**Which piece are you seeking to cover next? Are you planning to do covers on Dawntrail's soundtracks as well?**

I've started to prepare my covers of Dawntrail dungeon boss themes. I'm looking forward to covering Solution 9 as well, that music has been stuck in my head since they revealed it on Twitter. Of course I'm looking forward to discovering more Dawntrail songs as I play!

**“Soken asked Square Enix to invite Alex Moukala and me to perform “A Long Fall” with The Primals on stage at the London Fanfest!! It was honestly the best time of my life.”**



**Have you ever collaborated with another musician to make a piece? Who did you most enjoy working with, and do you have any dream collabs?**

Most of the time I collab with singers, sometimes with other musicians. I usually make my instrumental and then send it to the musician I collab with, with my instructions while leaving them total freedom to add their own ideas.

Usually when I collab with Alex Moukala, we always surpass ourselves thanks to our synergy and same understanding of music so it's always a pleasure to work with him. I've recently had the honor to collab with Amanda Achen for an FF15 Somnus cover. It was amazing to work with her and we'll cover more songs in the future.

But my biggest tasks recently were doing community medleys with hundreds of musicians. It all started with 40 musicians, to welcome back Soken when he announced that he beat cancer a few years ago, and tell him how much the community loves him. Then I did another one for the 10 years of FFXIV but it was out of control, more than 200 musicians registered this time! Then a One Winged Angel FF7 cover with 170 musicians, and a few days ago (at the time of this interview) an Endwalker medley with 300.

These big projects take hundreds of hours. First, I write the full arrangement, including the orchestra. I have all the musicians listed on a Google Sheet, and I colored their names according to their levels. That helps me to assign them a part suited to their skills! Then I contact all of them one by one. I can't do otherwise because each musician has a different part, and I set up a deadline for their recordings.

For singers in the choir, they all have different harmonies to choose. Usually I receive some recordings every day before the deadline, so I mix like 1h a day, that allows me to progress without being burnt out.

However on deadline day, usually half of the musicians send their recordings at the same time so I have a huge rush to finish the song, including the video. Generally this final phase takes me 2 full weeks working 10-12h a day. I'm in the stubborn phase where I tell myself "the sooner I finish this, the sooner I get back to my normal life & work schedule".



**What is the process like when you're covering a song from FFXIV? Do you just pick a random one to do, or do you only cover songs that resonate with you?**

Usually I start by playing rhythm guitar over the original song, then I write the drums, and record bass, lead guitar, additional harmonies guitars and then production stuff (adding effects, sometimes orchestra). I just pick the songs that I love the most.

**Do you prefer to stay as close to the original piece as possible or throw your own originality into a piece and give it a twist?**

I always stay close to the spirit of the original song while adding my own thing. To give you an example, In the Balance has these amazing melodies playing on violin. So I played these melodies on guitar. If something doesn't sound right, I play something else, but in the same vibe to reproduce the same feeling.

**Would you say this is more of a hobby for you or a career? Do you get booked or accept booking requests?**

It started as a hobby. I play in my home studio in my room. After 8 years, I had the incredible luck to have an audience big enough so I could quit my day job (I was a web developer) and create music full time! It was at the start of Endwalker.

I'm grateful to my community for allowing me to live my dream.

I did a live Twitch concert for Lunarcon last year, an online fan event. I'll do the next one too. I played my own covers. Moreover, Square Enix invited me in London last year to do a Twitch concert for their community stream. And the icing on the cake, Soken asked Square Enix to invite Alex Moukala and me to perform "A Long Fall" with The Primals on stage at the London Fanfest!! It was honestly the best time of my life. I'm so grateful.

**Do you play FFXIV at all or just closely follow its content? When did you first initially get hooked on FFXIV?**

I started playing at 2.0, I have always been a big MMORPG player. I took a big break until Stormblood, and another one until Shadowbringers, and since then I come back at each new patch to play MSQ, discover new bosses and raids, do roulettes for a few weeks, and take another break.



What's the most memorable moment or person you've come across within our community?

The London Fanfest. It was magical. I had no idea SO MANY people enjoyed my music that much. I took without exaggerating hundreds of pictures with my fans during the weekend and I heard their amazing stories.

I made a lot of new friends, and I also met a lot of the Square Enix staff and they are all lovely and passionate. And of course, hanging out with Soken and the members of The Primals and the Square Enix Music staff was an unforgettable experience.



*We're incredibly grateful for Husky offering us a chunk of his limited time to sit down with us. If you're a curious new fan, or an old one looking to get caught up on Husky's latest covers, his YouTube channel is the best place to binge his work. He's also slated to be a guest at AetherCon, a fan convention taking place in-game, so don't miss your chance to meet him in Final Fantasy XIV!*



10.31.24

**AE  
LOWKEY**

# CANDLE LIT VIGIL



*Día De Los Muertos*

**Dynamis, Cuchulainn, Lavender Beds - Ward 9, Plot 3**

**8:00PM - 12:00AM EST**

**8:00PM**

**LOWKEY HALLOWEEN PARTY**

**10:30PM**

**OPEN MIC POETY VIGIL**



**EZRA  
PARZIVAL**



# COFFEE &

# Carbuncles

## Coffee with Nobu

By: Nirzhi Baskal

**Thank you for this interview opportunity. I look forward to learning more about your podcast. Could you introduce yourself and give a brief rundown of what you do and what your content is?**

I'm Nobutaka Fairclough, though most people refer to me as Nobu. I am the host of the cafe-themed interview podcast Coffee & Carbuncles on Spotify and YouTube.

What makes Coffee & Carbuncles unique is two fold; first off is the cafe roleplay aspect of the podcast. Every episode begins with a skit, and then has [sound effects added]. This is to give the listener a moment to get comfortable and feel like they have entered the unique cafe. I want them to imagine that they are at a table enjoying a casual conversation with me and my guest(s).

The second unique aspect is the content itself. Instead of focusing on the latest updates or [social media debate], I try to have a guests on to represent various subgroups within the community. I may have a Garlean RPer on to inform the listener about Garlean Roleplayers, or I may have an artist on to tell us about art party streams on Twitch. I want to help shed light

on the various groups that make up the game's player base.

**That's a unique setup. Was it difficult to get started for a niche subject like this? What was that process like?**

From a purely mechanical standpoint, it wasn't difficult at all. I bought a microphone, downloaded some free editing software, and signed up for a podcast hosting site. The difficult part was getting over my own anxiety. I had the idea for this podcast a year before I recorded the first episode. I spent about six months wrestling with my own self doubt and fears. "How will people perceive this?" "Am I going to be welcomed in the content creation space?" "Even though I've been actively playing since 2.0, who am I to try and tell other people about this game?" That was the difficult part.

Fortunately, I pitched the idea to friends who play and they liked it. I contacted some content creators both in and out of the XIV community and they liked it as well and welcomed me with open arms. A good friend of mine offered to be my first guest and eventually I pushed my anxiety down and hit record.

**What would you say the most**

**difficult thing about running the podcast is, and what would be the easiest?**

I would say the most difficult part is probably coordinating between time zones. FFXIV has a global player base and I don't want to just limit my podcast to Aether NA players. I've had interviews with people in Europe, I've also spoken with people in Asia about being interviewed. Trying to figure out a time when we can be reasonably awake and ready for an interview is tough when different time zones are involved.

In regards to the easiest part, I would say the interviews themselves. I've had guests that don't normally do a lot of talking and they weren't sure they would speak enough, yet when you start chatting away, you'd be really surprised at how easily an hour passes by. I've had multiple

instances in which a guest or myself will stop mid conversation and go "No way! Has it already been an hour?"

**What would you say your favorite part of running the podcast is?**

Learning more about the broader XIV player base is easily my favorite part. In university, I studied sociology and anthropology and that is part of why the podcast focuses on different groups the way it does. When I have a guest on the podcast, I'm never thinking "Who will get me the most downloads?" The purpose of having a guest on the podcast is to represent a part of the community I either already know about and want to share with other people or a part of the community that I want to learn more about. The XIV community is so big and so varied that I'm always finding new and unique sub-groups.



**There are a lot of sub groups; the main struggle is finding them all. Is that one of your hopes for the channel?**

In the podcast itself, I have compared the XIV player base to a huge ocean and most of us are generally just standing on the beach. You can look out and go, "Wow, that is a big body of water," but your scope is limited. I could do this podcast for the rest of the game's life span and still only be scratching the surface. You also have to consider that every day new people are coming to XIV or are getting ideas for new projects. I don't believe I will ever get close to featuring every subgroup that deserves to be featured. I will do my best though.

When I started the podcast, I said I would take things an episode at a time. That has evolved into me taking things one season at a time. [A particular goal would maybe] be that I want the community to understand how amazing it is. When you look at social media, it is really easy for the XIV community to be very critical of itself. It is even easier for those outside the community to be critical of it. When you actually dive into it though, really immerse yourself in that giant body of water I

mentioned before, you find that this community is incredible. People are so creative, they are so kind, and I want to help people look at our community the way I look at it - to help others understand just how diverse and how beautiful it is. Even though I can only show them one small part at a time.

**Even just writing for this magazine, I'm seeing all sorts of different things and learning about different communities, so I agree with your sentiment. Was there anything else you wanted to mention for the readers?**



If you take anything from reading this interview, or listening to Coffee & Carbuncles, I want it to be this; the XIV community is massive and everyone experiences the game differently. You have people that play XIV for the glimmers, for raiding, you have roleplayers, you have DJs. As a player, you should experience as much of it for yourself as possible. Don't listen to a podcast about Garlean RPer and go "I understand Garlean RPer." Go chat with one yourself. Don't just trust someone to go, "This is what the club scene is like in Final Fantasy XIV." Go experience it for yourself. Experience as many different aspects of the community as you can because there is a lot. Even if you aren't sure a part of the community is something you will enjoy long term, at least experience something once. It may surprise you.





# RETURN OF THE ANGELS

By: Scarletta Vendetta, Midgardsormr

Could you imagine how a simple macro might become captivating entertainment in Eorzea? **Macro dancing** is the art of chaining macros together to create visually stunning performances backed by music, which is typically played on [cytube.com](http://cytube.com). This unique form of creative outlet is becoming increasingly popular thanks to trailblazers such as Clockwork Angels. It all started when the troupe's leader, Solara Leocor, had a chance encounter at a venue which ignited a passion that has since captivated many across the realm. Clockwork Angels has since evolved from a solo act into a vibrant collective, drawing on the diverse talents of its members to craft their increasingly intricate routines. Plus, who doesn't love a show full of bun boys?

Angels were born. Kazuto Riversong offered me the opportunity to perform weekly at the newly founded **Club Ley Lines**. He and Willow gave me the freedom and support to bring my dreams to life. What started as a solo act quickly became a small troupe that grew even larger over time. The troupe name is a tribute to the Rush song and album Clockwork Angels.

I cannot listen to *\*any\** music without assessing for its potential use in a macrodance. I listen to music and I "see" what I want to happen. So, choosing music really depends on which visions I want to bring to life.

When it comes to the work of creating the choreography, I will break down a song into its different sections, how long each lasts, and make notes on what is happening musically and lyrically. Then I make notes on what I want to happen during each of those sections. I have notebooks that are full of cryptic notation and illegible writing and graph paper. After all of the planning, then I can sit down and work out the individual steps. That takes a lot of trial and error and repetition. Try a move with the music, see if it works, then build from there. Sometimes, you get unexpected magic. Those are the moments that have me yelling out loud. The whole process can take

*"Synchronized and graceful, they move like living things,"*



Globes of light float in mid

## Interview with Clockwork Angels

**Can you tell us about the origin story of Clockwork Angels? How did you first discover macrodancing?**

**Solara** - It was a dark and stormy night...Not really.

Three years ago I happened to wander into a venue with an in-house troupe. Like so many, I had no idea what was happening on stage until someone passed me a music link. It was as if the clouds parted, the sun shone down, and all the world was made right. My mind was blown and the only thought going through it was *"I'm going to do that."*

Less than a year later, Clockwork

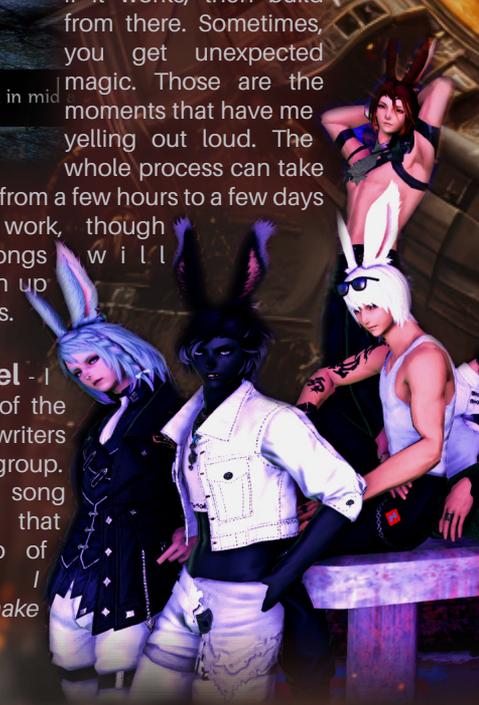
as the lyrics say. How could I use anything else?

**Can you walk us through the process of creating a new macrodance routine? How do you choose the music and choreography?**

**Solara** - *"Write what makes your heart happy,"* is something we say a lot. Everyone has a different process, both for choosing songs and the methods used to create the choreography.

anywhere from a few hours to a few days of solid work, though some songs will get broken up over weeks.

**Ringbel** - I am... one of the "chaotic" writers of the group. I'll hear a song and have that light bulb of "Ooohh.. I could make



this work." Then I sit and listen to it a few times to break the song into pieces as I try to imagine what class and skills I want to use for certain lyrics or beats.

### "What is a dance but a physical song of the heart?"

I gun it from there once I get my "snippets" set to build around.

**How has the release of Dawntrail affected your troupe?**

**Anju - ALL OF THE CHANGES.** I still need to go back and fix all my stuff.

**Solara** - We took a long break over the summer to prepare for and enjoy Dawntrail. We are slowly getting back into the groove. "I forgot how to do..." is not an uncommon statement right now. This is good because it allows us to come up with different ways to accomplish the same thing that perhaps we might not have considered previously.

There are changes, not only with the addition of new jobs, but the changes to existing ones. Without diving into too many technical details, these changes sometimes require the complete rework of choreography created before Dawntrail.

**Ringbel** - ...along with updated cooldowns. Part of the fun is in putting together the pieces of this beautiful puzzle to create a dance. I'm looking forward to writing with the new tools and flashy moves that we have.

**What makes Clockwork Angels unique compared to other macrodance troupes in Eorzea?**

**Solara** - I thought about this one for a very long time. I do not know what every troupe or

macrodance artist out there is doing, so it wouldn't be fair for me to say that we're the only ones who do this or that. My choreography will carry traces of those from whom I learned, as will the choreography of those who learned from me. As macrodancers, our palette is limited but we try our best to push limits and use colors in a unique way. I would say, come to a show and see what makes

gorgeous.

**Anju** - Masquerade! I'll never forget that first practice where we had everyone and after the dancer section we went back to white mage and the wings popped out and I started crying because it was just so moving and everything lined up so perfectly with the music. It still gets me. **EVERYTIME.THERE. ARE. TEARS!!!**

**Ringbel** - Those first few shows as an official group meant a lot to me. Seeing this dream of Solara's take its initial flight and now seeing what it's become has moved me. My personal favorite dance is "Rewrite the Stars" from the Greatest Showman. "The Phoenix" and "Brute Justice" are also up there because everyone did awesome and seeing the area light up with phoenixes moves me.

High above the city square



us different. Oh. And bunny boy shows. That might not be unique, but \*damn\* are they fun to do.

**What does a practice session look like?**

**Solara** - \*Most\* rehearsals run pretty smoothly. Over the last two years, they've gone from complete chaos, to organized chaos, to a fairly well-oiled machine. There are still shenanigans and laughing, usually someone ends up without pants because something didn't go as planned. If things go wrong, we giggle and fix it.

**Can you share a memorable performance or moment that stands out for you and the troupe?**

**Solara** - This past spring, we had the opportunity to work with a brilliant photographer, Bip. They had the idea of taking a group into a dungeon to perform so they could capture photos. We decided to attempt a large group and go into The Ridorana Lighthouse to perform "Clockwork Angels". You can't go through that instance without defeating all of the enemies. This meant that we were dragging along friends to help us out and watch while we performed the same song probably ten times. By the end, we were singing along (badly) and cracking up at the dancing robot. It was an experience that I won't soon forget. The pictures that Bip created are

**Looking ahead, do you have any exciting projects or new directions planned for Clockwork Angels? What are the best ways for fans to get updates from the troupe?**

Clockwork Angels are performing at AetherCon 2024!!!! We are a main stage act at 8 pm EST on September 28th. I cannot wait to show off what we've been working on. There are so many projects and shows! You can get updates in our discord.

<https://discord.gg/yRMdAzAMCa>  
<https://ca-dance.carrd.co/>

<https://www.youtube.com/@solaraleocor/>  
<https://x.com/SolaraLeocor>

**A few of our videos:**

- Clockwork Angels (the song)
- The Phoenix
- Masquerade
- Our "Superbowl Halftime Show"
- One Little Victory
- Men in Tights (choreographed by Anju)



# Carrot Fever

Interview with rising pop sensation, Zabigail Netherstruck  
By: Scarletta Vendetta

**Zabigail:** I think I'm ready, I love your top by the way!  
**Vendetta:** Thanks! I love your whole outfit. I appreciate you joining me for this interview. You can skip any questions you don't want to answer, just say 'skip.'  
**Zabigail:** I'm fighting the temptation to say skip to everything. I'm a bit of a prankster like that.  
<Vendetta straightens up.>



**Vendetta: Can you tell us about your early years? Were you interested in music and fashion?**

Zabigail: Clothing is a good way to show off who you are without saying anything. I'd say I've always been inclined that way, but I never thought music would be something I got into.

**Vendetta: Was there a particular moment that you consider a turning point in your music career?**

Zabigail: I still very much feel like a newcomer! I wrote a few songs to make my colleagues laugh, and at some point I was listening and I thought... "Wow... *this isn't half bad. I'd dance to this.*" That's what led me to wanting to create a music video.

**Vendetta: I first discovered your single, "Plogons Come Back" and "Carrot Fever." from a toместone app. Can you give us insight on where you drew inspiration to produce these songs?**

Zabigail: I have a ... unique... relationship with carrots and I wanted to share my love of them in a tongue-in-cheek kind of way. I tend to put carrot motifs on everything. 'Carrot Fever' was the bi-product of that. I'm sure people have various interpretations of those lyrics... But I'll let some things be a mystery.

As for 'Plogons Come Back'... It's a metaphor for the feeling of yearning, nostalgia, and remorse caused from no longer having access to what

you think makes you, you.

That song came during a difficult time of my life. I haven't been feeling myself and it was me coming to terms with the concept that I may have become codependent with "plugins". I think the feeling of loss is fairly relatable, even if my writing style is a little odd.

**Vendetta: I've heard you're also working on a full album?**

Zabigail: I'm working on a full album! "Degen Hours" is a celebration of the strange ways we all unwind from UI'dah to Tural. I can't help but make it a little more provocative than people might expect... I actually have the next single here for you to listen to if you'd like a little sample.

**Vendetta: Oh, yes please!**

Scarletta Vendetta listens to the recording, bobbing her head to the catchy tune.

**Vendetta: The lyrics are very clever.**

Zabigail: This is the album's title song, "Degen Hours". My friend Veno helped me with the lyrics, so it's a little collaborative. I really love this song a lot, and I'm hoping people familiar with "Quicksands culture" find joy in it.

**Vendetta: Are there any creators in the realm with whom you would love to collaborate with?**

Zabigail: EVERYONE. I'm a bit of a collab slut. Oops, sorry! I mean I love to collaborate.

**Vendetta: Speaking of, I want to pivot**

a little and discuss your clothing line.

Zabigail: It's not really clothing, but more accessories and weapons. You might be able to guess that a lot of my products are carrot themed. I'm currently working with my development partner, Fel. You'll be able to find backpacks, tents, purses - that kind of thing. We're slow to develop together, but we really strive for quality. Have you seen our bags?

**Vendetta: I have seen them advertised, though not yet in person.**

Zabigail furnishes a brilliant green backpack in the likeness of a cactuar.

Scarletta Vendetta's eyes grow wide as she runs her fingers over the fantastic stitching.

**Vendetta: Wow the quality is amazing!**

Zabigail: This is one of my favorites. The bag is made with cactuar leather that was locally sourced.

**Vendetta: What's your favorite pastime in Eorzea? Do you have any places you frequent or favorite DJs?**

(Pictured: Personalized Spellcasting)





Zabigail: I am bumped into at local d a n c e venues all over. I'm scared of mentioning my favorite DJs without m a k i n g

someone feel left out... Yams is always a party, The Gundams are so charming, Peachy knows how to keep a party going, and Swage's music selection is top notch. People have mixed expectations when it comes to clubs...It's about who you go with...I try to bring positivity and encourage people to participate in the experience around them. If you see me there, don't be afraid to say hi.

**Vendetta: Can you share your long-term goals?**

Zabigail: Fel and I have been working at finishing up our Carrot-inspired tools and weapons, "Carrots of Chaos". It's hard to shape carrots for every use, but we have found a way to make every discipline utilize them. There will be lots of products coming out of Zab&Fel in the near future. I have been delving into personalized spell castings. As for my music plans... it's hard to say. I'm going to write what

my heart wants me to and if I end up making a second album, then it was meant to be.

**Vendetta: Between music, merchandise, and growing popularity you are well into becoming an Eorzean influencer!**

Zabigail: I wouldn't say that!

**Vendetta: What's the best way for fans to keep up with your new projects and releases?**

Zabigail: I post what I work on the usual social media c h a n n e l s , and all of my products will be in the XIV Mod Archive.

**Vendetta: Is there anything you would like to add?**

Zabigail: To all o f

the Eorzea, remember that we all deserve a chance to have fun and escape from our day to day lives. All of us just want to experience love, joy, happiness and self expression. We deserve it. Remember that not everything has to be taken so seriously. I love every bunny with all of my carrot-fuelled heart, and hope to see you out there during Degen Hours.



# Talkin' Tacos from Thanalan to Tural



Food Correspondent Ruckus Fiddlesticks

Of all the foodstuffs I could write about with any culinary authority, I may be Eorzea's leading expert on tacos. My father, Turudawa Kurdawa, may have been East Thanalan's first true taquero, or at least the first to make use of New World crops as a roadside staple by tucking tuco-tuco meat into a millioncorn tortilla. Caravan drivers flocked to his stall at the Golden Bazaar, which served many travelers on the Old Allagan Sunway prior to the Calamity.

The story of their origin is something I was only half-told as a boy, knowing little beyond the very romantic notion that my father and mum came up with them as resourceful means of earning our livelihood. The spiny-backed moles that encroach on Drybone's roads and bother our alldgoat herds were pesky when aggressive and required frequent culling via trapline, but morsels of their meat were quite good when ground, browned and seasoned with my father's jealously guarded secret spice blend. A humble filling, affordable, and fairly fun to say, in the golden days before Dalamud's fall, the tuco-tuco taco became a landmark hit.

Flatbread street foods like shawarma or gyros are common classics in Ul'dahn cuisine, but the New World corn flour, pressed very thin, gave our Bazaar tacos a distinctive taste. Sometimes when traders coming in from the

Shroud would sell off all their fast-ripening alligator pears, too close to softened for Ul'dah's markets, my father would buy them up and mash them with coarse salt and citrus rind into a topping he called 'Whackamoley'. He sold a griddled, cheesy version ('Kwehsadillas'), especially popular with the chocobo couriers.

In the course of my travels I came to learn that my family didn't really invent this food, and that tacos were a New World thing, likely brought over with whoever introduced Thanalan locals to popotos, tomatoes, corn and nopales. At first it stung at pride in my roots, but my wanderer's spirit led me to pursue the truth about tacos, all the way across the Indigo Deep.

Imagine my surprise, discovering this past summer just how ubiquitous yet regionally unique the tacos are in Tural! In the port capital of Tuliyoallal, nearly everyone has a favorite taco stand and strong opinions

about what makes for the best taco. Following my nose and the advice of many friendly locals, I stumbled upon the hottest spots quickly.

Not far from the docks, you'll find the renowned churrascaria and unofficial adventurers' guild of Tuliyoallal, Xbalyav Ty'e. It's here that folks gather to share storytelling sessions, a strong cocktail or three, and a plethora of mouthwatering grilled meats and freshly caught seafood. Fresh stardust shrimp pulled from the nearby shallows make for a great taco filling here, and swampmonk tail steak hauled in from Miyakabek'zoma is given a long boozy bath in mezcal marinade before being kissed with its signature char. The house taco shells are also known for having good crunch, and can be taken to-go... but why hurry, when the company's welcome, the seabreeze inviting, and the carnivorous delights only end when your obsolete belt from two expansions ago needs to be let out another notch.





I was lucky to share a meal here one bustling evening with a few friendly Turali folks who were happy to voice their point of view on tacos, a food that can be made both familiar and new:

"I'd say tacos are the delicacy I enjoy when we aren't mid-travel." Isttowani, a Hhetsarro hunter who also enjoys his people's pemmican as road rations, tells me when he sits down for a more leisurely meal at Xbalyav Ty'e. "Easy to get, come in a myriad of unique flavors across Tural, and I don't worry that it will be made incorrectly. If it breaks, I simply have nachos."

"It is a good thing to experiment, I think! Especially when you are far from home." His partner, Natayo, encouraged me to experience a diverse taste of Tural's regional specialties on my journey, but also reflected on the importance of nostalgic and familiar flavors. "But sometimes there is nothing quite like what you're used to. Comfort food that holds meaning to you will fill your belly more than anything else."



**"My biggest dream is to make this the most popular taco stand in Tural – So popular, they'll let me open one in every nation across the salt!"**

**- Tiisol Ja, Proprietress of Tii's Tacos**

Further along the Bayside Bevy and just off the pier, some of the spiciest tacos in town are served up at another local gem, Auntie Tii's. While popular with the tourists, Tuliyoall residents also call her offerings "addictive", and note that Tiisol Ja, the beloved Hoobigo Proprietress, never skimps on the fillings or their flavorful heat. You'll always find a colorful crowd of all ages gathered here in rain or shine! The staff here are innovative, open to studying cuisines from abroad to appeal to visitors from across the star. I received a tip off at the leve-counter that the secret ingredient in Tii's Tacos is royal maple syrup- a rich sweetness that enhances the meat and spices!

Invigorated by Tuliyoall's vibrant food scene, I ventured to settlements beyond the capital, eager to explore the regional varieties of specialty tacos.

In the jungles of Yak'Tel, I learned about the traditional cooking method for a dish made famous by the Dawnservant's Feat of Repast. Wild boar meat

is slathered in achiote paste and bitter orange juice. It gets wrapped in Najool leaves from the lower forests and buried in a pit oven called a piib, where it roasts until tender and flavorful. Xibruq pibil is a taco filling so delicious it is said to have ended generations of tribal conflict!

To the north in Shaaloani, several locals advise me to try Rroneek tongue, as it makes for the tenderest taco of them all. These cuts prove difficult to come by at the butcher, so until I am invited to join a hunting party, I will gladly be devouring the carne asada in good company with mezcal on the side at the Hhusatahwi saloon.

However, the latest Culinarian's Guild cookbook recipe for these tacos calls for the most curious flour for the tortillas. Dark rye from Old Shayalan? Surely I wasn't eating pumpernickel tortillas last week? The Al Pastor of Urqopacha recipe raises even more questions. It calls for sauteed alpaca steak and pineapple salsa, instead of a pineapple marinade and slowly cooked, mouthwatering rotisserie method I've seen in every Turali iteration of this cooking style. It raises the question - who else is out there, creating and evolving the definitions of what tacos can be?

As long as nobody tries to call it a sandwich, I'm all in. In the meantime, I have some Rroneek lengua to track down.

**Craving some Taco Tuesday RP? Come on out to this open world initiative, where a vibrant Tural-based community is emerging.**



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## Admiral Hawkes Takes Vol.6

Article by: Sadicia Hawke



### Hawke

I love your Pizza Parlor idea and its atmosphere! What was your inspiration for starting a pizza place?

### Jaldore

Well, before making the parlor I initially went around delivering pizza as kind of a joke. At first I went up to a venue and delivered a whole bunch of pizzas under a fake name. I made it clear to the owners that it was a joke, but after a few attempts at this I started gaining a genuine appreciation for what I was doing. I thought it was a fun and interesting way to interact with the community. People would react really positively to it and I had fun doing it, so I figured that I would start doing deliveries via Party Finder. That went so well that I eventually decided I should open a venue of my own. My intent was to keep the delivery aspect but offer an actual location to base it out of.

### Hawke

I've met some of your crew, and they seem like quite a lively bunch! Can you tell me a bit more about them?

### Jaldore

Right now I have two great team members, Risque' Wiskey and Sant Anastasia who bring a lot to the table in their own respects. Risque has a genuine passion for what we are doing and a charming personality to boot. Ana actually started as one of my customers, and I turned around one day and she was in the kitchen setting things on fire, so she was a natural fit for the job. Additionally, I also receive consultation and editing advice from my friend Kazu'to Reirnali.

### Hawke

Your parlor's atmosphere is so wonderful and authentic inside. Did you have help decorating it?

### Jaldore

I did most of it myself in a single all-nighter but had consultation from Emis The Kitsune who is an interior decorator. She is very insightful and worked on my

house in Mist. I'm an omni-crafter so I was able to make most of the furniture myself but had some help from my static members, particularly Zero Mishma.

### Hawke

How has the reception been regarding you and the community? I've noticed your Discord is quite popular.

### Jaldore

Nothing short of amazing! I have met some great people just from deliveries alone, it always amazes me when I get to visit a new venue and see the depths of people's creativity! My favorite type of deliveries are those who request pizza to venues/friends anonymously, those always yield the best interactions.

### Hawke

Do you have any plans for the future of Chocoroni's Pizza?

### Jaldore

I have a lot of plans floating around right now. I am thinking about expanding to a bigger location but I am not in a hurry because the real-estate game is tricky and honestly the small apartment aesthetic is part of the charm, so I am not even sure if I will follow through with that. But I am always looking to expand my brand and cook up new events for our patrons! At the end of the day, I started doing this because it's fun and this will continue to be the mindset I carry with me into the future; it has to be fun. That's why we're all here, to have fun and enjoy ourselves in this amazing game!



THE

# CLUCKENING

By: Kuro Whulu

Who knew Poultry had such killer moves...

Bard Venues. You know them. a quick talk with him to answer You love them. The drinks are the burning questions we all have flowing. The music is pumping. The about this staple in the bard com- bards are delivering an epic per- munity! formance, and in the midst of it all, you can't help but get the urge to start to move your feet to whatever music is currently resounding around you. Heck, I am part of a bard band, and I still feel the thrill of listening to my fellow bards tear it up as my body becomes entranced. It happens to us all.

However, there is one aspect of the bard venue that we have yet to discuss. When you look up at the stage, often times, you will be greeted by a most unusual, but also extremely satisfying sight: four, neon-glowing, giant chickens who are working equally hard to entertain as they dance the night away. They are wondrous, they are magnificent, but they also invoke a measure of curiosity. Where did these chickens come from, and where did they learn such killer dance moves?

It starts with Saloben, the leader of the dance troupe now known as The Cluckening. Sal has long been a fixture at Bard Venues all over Eorzea, and lucky for all of us, this reporter was able to catch

**Kuro:** Alright, first question is the obvious one: What made you decide to make a group of dancing chickens for bard venues around Eorzea?

**Sal:** A few years ago, I was in an FC that had a bard group that was well known and played at a lot of venues. The Ryoka Sisters were an amazing band and just seeing how much work they put into making their performances made me want to help, but unfortunately as a chicken I have zero musical talent. What I do have are dance moves that very few can match. I rounded a few of my fellow dancing chickens and went on the road with the Ryoka Sister's.

**Kuro:** I love the lore on the card! What made you decide to make a little story about the chickens, and can you expand on it?

**Sal:** In short: People wanted a backstory. I was asked often where did these huge color changing

chickens

come from

and me being a chicken, do not have the best memory, to give a good backstory for the chickens. I relied on our group storyteller, Czar Beefcake, to tell the story of the chickens. His ability to bring out a story has impressed everyone.

**Kuro:** Has there been any challenges in creating a group of dancing hens, and how did you overcome them?

**Sal:** The biggest challenges are the people that try to cook us. Just kidding of course, we love the crowds and the constant jabs at how people want to throw us in an oven or have a HUGE barbecue is a lot of fun. If we can make one person laugh or be amazed at the chickens, then it all worth it.

**Kuro:** Do you have any favorite moments from your performances so far?

**Sal:** Once in a while someone



# LOVE @ CHICKEN

will send me a tell or be in voice chat and tell me how their kids are watching the show and can't get enough of watching the chickens dance. THAT makes it all worth it. Those stories are heart-warming and puts the biggest smile on my face.

**Kuro:** Is there anything or anybody you would like to shout out? Now is the time!

**Sal:** The list of people and venues that helped the chickens grow is a long list indeed. I consider Dona from the Ryoka Sisters to be the co-founder of the chickens. She helped me get started with the chickens and let me tag along with the band as they played. It was a fun time and also a time to learn what people liked about the birds.

Just to name a few others:

Omni thank you for suggesting the fireworks, we lose a lot of feathers, but it's worth it. Doc holiday of huckleberry needed a more fashionable chicken in a suit that dazzles the crowd still. Cheyanne from Spooky's bar and grill gave us a chance to dance for the shows they put on, and I greatly appreciate it. Jack

Trader, my tech-savvy guy who has saved my chicken butt more than once, has been a huge help and a great friend. Archer's Den has been amazing to work with, Cate and Dallash redesigned their stage and floor layout just so that the huge chickens had a spot to dance. There are many more that have helped along the way, and if I missed anyone, please do not be offended. I'm a chicken and have the memory that goes with being a chicken. Love you all!

It is hard to imagine anyone more humble and more kind than Sal. Bards all over Eorzea work hard to create music and to share it with the masses, but as impressive is someone doesn't seek pay and who doesn't seek recognition. They simply want to entertain and enhance the performances of the bards who take the stage. That is Saloben and his dancing chickens at their core. A group of talented performers who just want to have fun and help however they can.

You can catch Sal and his brigade at Bard Venues all over Eorzea and at most big barding events including The Huckleberry Saloon, The Archer's Den, Spooky Bard and Grill, and Eorzea's Got Talent. Just be ready to bring your dancing shoes with you!



*may we meet again at journey's end...*

# THE FINAL DAZE



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# FINAL FANTASY™

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## EORZEA CAFE

We're back with another delicious tale of culinary delights, this time from beyond Eorzea's borders! On our most recent trip to Japan, we visited the Eorzea Cafe in Osaka to take part in the Dawntrail festivities, which included a brand new limited edition menu and two new class drinks: Pictomancer and Viper.

The "Golden Legacy" of Dawntrail is unsurprisingly very citrus forward! Notes of orange and lemon are heavily featured in the two newest menu additions, which include a tropical soda and a delicious ice cream parfait.

If you've never been to the Eorzea Cafe before, you should know that the majority of their beverages skew towards the sweet side, and these were no different! Even a Moogles might've pucker up at their first sip of the Golden Passion Soda, retailing at 880 gil or ¥880. This seasonal beverage is composed of a bottom layer of striking blue lychee syrup - which has a delicate almost floral taste, followed by a thick float of passionfruit syrup which is very heavily sweetened with a tropical aftertaste. These two syrups are topped off with a pour of sparkling club soda and a



final scoop of champagne gold jelly before being garnished with a lemon slice. While overall heavy on the sweet notes, the colors perfectly mirror a sunny day on the ocean as the shades of "golden" yellow stack over the azure ocean of lychee syrup. Perhaps more pleasant to look at than to drink, this delightful concoction would still receive a warm round of applause from Urianger himself!

If you're in the mood for something refreshing after such a hot day in the sun, you're sure to love the delicious dessert gracing the menu for this festival. The Dawntrail Parfait, ringing in at a modest 1,100 gil, features the same golden champagne jelly as the Golden Passion Soda but is layered with custard whip, tart jellied mango, cubes of soft vanilla sponge cake, orange sauce, and finally a scoop of vanilla ice cream. This lovely parfait is garnished with orange slices, white chocolate, a sprig of parsley and an edible wafer em-

blazoned with the Dawntrail logo. This incredible masterpiece was the highlight of our visit to the cafe with rave approval from our whole party. Light and refreshing, the tart fruit flavors were perfectly complemented by the notes of creamy vanilla in the sponge and custard.

One of the highlights of visiting the Eorzea Cafe is the curated drinks they've created for each class, and Viper and Pictomancer have officially been added to the menu at every location! Viper is a delicious blend of green apple and black tea syrups topped off with water and a



lime slice garnish. It may seem underwhelming in appearance, but the tart apple flavor is sure to pack a punch. Pictomancer is a dazzling palette of pastels with a base of purple haze syrup and soda water. The drink includes a trio of three "paint" filled syringes including blue bulgur syrup, yellow passionfruit syrup, and pink sakura syrup that you can combine in any way you wish. No matter which shades you choose to paint with, the drink is absolutely delectable.

- Rizu and Breezy Callyn

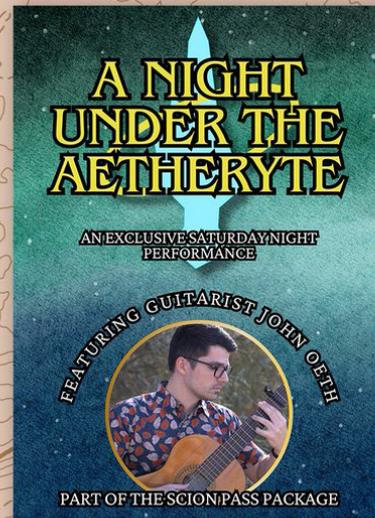
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