

Durgas plays the Big Island - West Hawaii Today, January 2008  
By Ma'ata Tukuafu

Given the chance to be at home with his family rather than play music at 125 world-wide concerts a year, Patrick Simmersbach, a Big Island resident says it was an easy choice. "I honestly do not miss the concert life; especially the sleep deprivation, smoky dungeons, gray German highways and angst-ridden punk rockers," Simmersbach said. One of three brothers who make up The Durgas band, Simmersbach said The Durgas' Big Island tour is a chance for a reunion, "without having to schlep gear around the globe and be away from my wife and kids."

To try to place The Durgas' music in any one genre is futile. After playing the Big Island circuit a year ago, audiences were impressed with the versatility, musical ability and raw energy The Durgas band conveyed.

It's been a series of name changes for the band, as the Simmersbach brothers have been playing music since they were children. They have released ten albums under the names "A Subtle Plague," and "A Drastic Measure." Now as "The Durgas" [the Hindu Goddess of War,] the band tours worldwide, and appears on Cannery Row Records label. With an incredibly diverse background, the brothers speak many languages having had a nomadic childhood as children of a Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) diplomat.

"We speak English, German, French and Italian as well as a little bit of Mali, Senegal, Tanzanian and Thai," Simmersbach explained. A provocative and very interesting documentary about the Simmersbach family entitled "Maomi," is shown every year in Europe on the ARTE television channel. Maomi is the name of the Simmersbach matriarch who had access to a Super 8 video camera and documented much of her life as she moved around the world and raised a growing family.

As a European "hippy family" with ultimately six children, music was pervasive in their household. Oldest child Patrick Simmersbach looks back at how his life has evolved and considers himself very fortunate. "We grew up loved, cared for, and with a lot of music," he said.

Now, Simmersbach is teaching his two children how to enjoy the spontaneity of music. "Sometimes too much focus on the theoretical side of music can stifle ability, confidence and the joy of musical creation," Simmersbach said, and reminisced of performing with his brothers who did not know how to read music. "They played straight from the soul," he added.

The Durgas will be performing concerts in Sri Lanka and Thailand before stopping on the Big Island. They will not perform on any other Hawaiian island on this tour. Local band Moemoea opens all shows for the Durgas. Don't miss this opportunity to hear original music performed by The Durgas, a truly international band.

For more information: [www.thedurgas.com](http://www.thedurgas.com)

