

Ciao Joe thanks to give us some of your time before this live performance. When your passion for the music borned and at wich age you understood that it could be something serious?

It was born at the beginning of '70s, I was 16. My first approach with the music, especially in english, was with Beatles and the Rolling Stones, as all the guys of that generation. I have to say that we had a great school! Just having like samples the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, we started to get guitars and we tried to imitate them even for the hair style and the way to dress; that was a real revolution, especially in the South of Italy where I was living at that time. When it start to be something serious...? Soon for real it was serious; when I started to play and everybody around made me compliments I understood that it was a passion that I had to make grow and maybe one day I could be someone important playing the guitar; after the first lessons, that they wasn't a real lessons, I saw that I was perfectly able to play. But not only this, I have to say again that it was a whole generation that gets the guitars and without study, started to make music. I always do the example of the guys from today that play with computers or playstations and they are great, if we have to try...while that generation had a deep passion for the music and it was grow up with the music too.

We can say that with Kim Brown and with the Kim and the Cadillacs too, you reached the maximum of popularity. What you was doing at that time, how did you meet him and how is your friendship today? Do you still on touch?

First of all I didn't play with the Kim and the Cadillacs in their best moment of success, I met Kim twenty years ago more or less, when his band was just split and then we have been real good friends and we decided to play togheter. We used to play elettric or acoustic guitars all around the clubs; and sometimes another member of the Kim and the Cadillacs, named Trutz Viking Groth enjoyed with us. We still to be great friends, right now he's living in Finland where he gets money playing. He loved Italy, but he didn't have the same success that he had in other countryies such as Finland for example, where he was well knew thanks to the Renegades too, a band where Kim was before the Kim and the Cadillacs. He was very famous around there.

Some questions by some old fans. First of all, what was changed after the band's exhibition at Sanremo's Italian Music Festival?

I didn't play with Kim at that time of their exhibition at the Festival. The band took part three times and the last was twenty years ago with a piece played in collaboration with another band called Equipe 84, but I didn't get part in that edition.

We know that Kim was very loved by female audience. How he managed the relations with girls? For the other members of the band was the same?

Well, Kim was, and he is right now a handsome man, blond and of course a rockstar and, especially in Italy, was really loved by female audience for this. He was well introduced in a nice group of people, he used to play often at the Piper, in Milan, already from the Renegades's age, and this made him popular within girls. For the rest of the band, I can't tell you exactly how was, because I knew them just by television or news papers, but I think they had a great success too, maybe not like Kim, that was the frontman of the group. For anyone interested, I suggest to search on YouTube the Renegades and you will find same interesting videos from that times.

Is there a fun anecdote about that time of your life or something that you remember with particular pleasure?

I remember with a lots of pleasure that in my little city, Molfetta, near by Bari, thanks to the amministration of that time, we had a lot of important musicians have a show there, in particular international jazzmen, and during that exhibition I had the opportunity to meet on person and have a quickly talk with talentuos artists, as Dizzy Gillespie and Archie Shepp. If I have to tell you a particular anecdote, I can say you when after a concert, in the same family restaurant where I was, I met the best drummer Danny Richmond, that he was playing with Charles Picus; I was a little boy, and I remember that he wrote to me "All the Best, Danny Richmond", I didn't know the meaning of it, but to me was an intensive pleasure that I still got. You have to know that in that time, even if we followed a lot the rock music, when we had the opportunity to see same great artists, we get really impressed. I'm talking about the end of the '70s, 1997 1978 more or less.

Was hard for you starting as a simple guitar player, made out a career and get a certain popularity as a solo and frontman of a band named like you?

In the South, I was almost knew, but not enough to make money playing music, and I didn't

have chance to work too. So, twenty years ago, I decided to move in Milan, looking for better opportunities; here I was lucky meeting up with Kim Brown and thanks to him I had the possibility to make out my career. Ten intensive years with him gave me the permission to be well known in all Italy as a blues and rock guitar player. Then in Italy, we have got difficulty to make live exhibitions, but thank to God we got a repertory always loved. I dedicated my-self to Stevie Ray Vaughan, Jimi Hendrix and Clapton and they are the best guitar players followed by the audience, this helped me a little bit. Then there are a lots of bassists and general players from Milan really great and everything become much better. There are a lots of places too, better, there was them, because now we are having a kind of crisis on the live clubs. Anyway, it was a combination of positive factors.

Blues is not for sure in Italy a common music kind. Is a advantage or a disadvantage for a bluesman that it is an hide type of music? Can we find a positive aspect from this situation?

Of positive there is that we are specialized to make this kind of music, people call us bluesmen and so we are an important point of reference for the new generations. About night performances, we are for sure in a little crisis, because the underground in Italy is died; for example during national party, public party in squares, there are no more blues bands, they are called only in specialized places or during blues's festivals. Then in Italy we got one more difficulty, a lots of american musicians are coming here, for this reason during these important events we are taking a part as italians. Of course we got a nice friendship and a cultural interchange with them, but we know how is going to work here, where for some kind of music, people loves most a foreign musician then an italian one, just because the other is foreign.

You are considered for sure, one of the most important bluesman in Italy, why did you decided to self-finance your creations? Is that a free artistic choice or is that a need coming from the music labels that don't invest in this kind of music?

Well, this is a positive factor, because an artist have the complete free choice, but without a doubt is a need too, because music labels don't help nobody to product anything. This happened because producing albums means spend a lots of money, about ten thousand of Euro and so a music label is not sure to get back these money selling this particular kind of music, because is not easy that blues sold about ten thousand pieces of albums, and from their point of view is understanding. So, many blues artists are costrected to self-finance them self, but is not so bad too, because sailing straight away the Cds to the audience, we can have our investment back.

Let's talk of "Parmatown", in this Cd for the second time you have got the collaboration of Dante Boccuzzi, on it you are a little far from your usual style.

Why did you change? How did you meet with Dante and how much he was forcing your choices?

I met Dante in a club in Milan, I was having a concert and some of his friends asked me if he could sing with me. I did it, I don't remember exactly what, but probably a song by Clapton and I liked his voice soon. We had some dinner together and then we decided to meet us often to try some pieces. To me it was interesting to have an English mother tongue, I always been close to the American modern music, to the grunge, and he was the perfect person to let me try a certain kind of music, then have an American singer on my Cd, is for sure an added value, always for the same reason of competition with foreign artists. For any Italian singing in English, is not easy to have success across the World, it's easier if you are a musician. Many friends of mine did it, as Joe Colombo, but for singers is harder. Recently I heard sing the Afterhours, that they are pretty good, and they sold nice even in the States, but I say again is not that easy.

Many pieces of "Parmatown", and some other tracks of you, are broadcast by different American radio networks. Why in Italy radios don't pay attention on the artists like you?

In Italy, radios broadcast most commercial music. There are few radios that have blues music, for example Lifegate, that sometimes have my pieces, or there is another radio, Città del Capo from Bologna, that one time had broadcast one of my concert on live direct, but they are just moments that Italian radios give to the blues.

We know that your personal music references are for sure Hendrix and Vaughan, and you dedicated them a live Cd. But looking back at your collaborations, we see that you played with artists of a different kind of music than yours, such as Bugo (young Italian singer). Which is your relation with all other music kinds? What do you listen beside blues?

Well, I liked to listen all the music. I'm always close by all young musicians that make new music. Bugo, for example, used to come to get some guitar lessons to me, to make better his way to play, but I didn't see that guy's creative qualities; when I listened his creations I loved

them a lot. So I started same collaborations, even at national level, because he is supported by an important label, the Universal. In a particular way, we worked together a lot for an acoustic project, a Cd named "La Gioia di Melchiorre" (Melchiorre's Pride), where I play and he sings. There is even a song dedicated to me, "Se avessi cinquant'anni" (If I was fifty years old) and it is really nice. Anyway I loved all the Italian singers. I use listen De Gregori, De Andrè, Tenco, Guccini... I don't want to miss nobody. Almost all of our singers are great, but I love most Tenco from when I was young, even I already followed rock music.

One curiosity: what do you use to do before a live performance?

Well, the principal fatigue is to assemble and to set the equipments, make the sound check and verify the status of the service. Then nothing special, if I liked the place, I prepare my-self for the show, I do what we are already doing now: I meet some friends, I do some talk with them talking about music and much more. I'm always quite before a performance, other artists are nervous, perturbed; I don't, I'm really relaxed, then when I reach the stage... the adrenaline goes out with all the fighting spirit and all the energy that I need to terminate the show.

In your life you did money doing a wide range of jobs: for example you started as guiding spirit, and right now you teach German in the high schools; so how do you live your relation with the music? Is that a job or an hobby?

Well, as I said before, music have to be first of all a passion, because without that you can't go anywhere. Then, this is became a real job for me: you have to organized your-self, you must dedicated to music a lots of hours during the day, you have to chose your members and you have to try to make things going not really perfect, but enough to do a great concert. So it's not an hobby, because when you reach this high level is not an hobby anymore, and even we get pay to play; I can say that it is a passion that it change in a real job.

Would you like to suggest something at the young artists running to have a career making music?

Yes, about the blues and the young musician that are reaching this kind of music, I suggest to listen well the old glories of blues, sometimes they are a part and we just remember Hendrix or Vaughan, while to play blues music is necessary going to the start. About all the other kind of

general young musicians, you have to see if it's just a passion, that is important, or you are even same talent, otherwise, if somebody is not able to play music, is much better just listening it. But, if you have even a few talent, and I tell again, you have a huge passion for the music, well is important to dedicate your-self to the music, spending for it a lots of time. Many young guys that start play without any particular interest, just to spend same time doing nothing or just to have the attentions of same friends, well, they are not doing nothing producting.

Thanks Joe for the time that you spent with us, have a nice performance!