

THE RANT AND RAVE GAZETTE

A Music Newsletter

Issue 23

Welcome to the twenty-third issue of the Rant. NOTE: the most recent issue comes up first with past issues following. Cheers!

THE HOKEY POKEY

“YOU DO THE HOKEY POKEY AND YOU TURN YOURSELF AROUND



“I’m turnin’, I’m turnin!.”

Continuing with the “Strange Encounters With My Guitar Heroes” theme, let’s take time for a quick visit with another titan of the guitar - Joe Pass.

JOE PASS

In my youth, I was part of a cadre of guitar teachers attached to a small music store. We were ambitious, reasonably talented and quite full of ourselves - an untenable position which got corrected almost immediately.

In any event, three of us decided to strike out on our own and start our own teaching studio. Shortly after its formation, my two partners thought it would be a fine idea to turn it into a full fledged music store - not a good choice for yours truly - a guy who thought ‘wholesale’ meant a good deal when you bought the whole chicken. The result was a joint called ‘Iron Music’ - a successful place that lasted for some time and eventually went into making instruments - Odyssey guitars.

My old partners, Ken Lindemere and Bob Gribling, had the bright idea of bringing in a well known jazz guitarist to do a clinic at the store, along with a concert at a local jazz club. They were lucky enough to get Joe Pass.

The event was a huge success. Shortly afterwards, Ken and I decided to take a trip down to Los Angeles to hear some music and, at the same time, visit Joe at his home in the valley. I was excited, partially because I knew we had an ace in the hole that would make us welcome visitors.

You see, Joe smoked cigars, and there was a ban on goods coming into the U.S. from Cuba at the time. There was no such ban in Canada, so Ken cleverly smuggled a box of Cubans into the country, and we were in like Flint.

The next thing we knew, there we were - two Canadian guitar playing chumps hanging at Joe Pass’ house. Joe was in the middle of recording his solo ‘Virtuoso’ series, and he was dragging out the D’Aquisto archtop he had used for the sessions - sessions that used a microphone on many of the tracks to capture the acoustic sound of the guitar. He handed it to me.

It was slimmer than I anticipated, but the sound fairly sprang off that carved archtop. I could see why he wanted to record it acoustically.

“Are you mostly playing this these days?” I asked.

“Not so much,” he replied, “I still like my old Gibson.”

He grabbed that famous old Gibson ES 175 off the guitar stand, turned to me and said,

“You wanna play a tune?”

“Sure,” I replied. I was scared to death.

“Some Day My Prince Will Come?”

“You bet.”

It was a great afternoon. We walked out of there with our heads in the clouds.

Joe was a kind, patient and humble man. He was also one of the best Jazz guitarists on earth.

LITTLE GEMS

ADVICE THAT WAS WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD



“Follow the Muse”

THATS ALL FOR NOW FOLKS! SEE YOU NEXT TIME