

RAY DETONE BIOGRAPHY

One could say that New York native, guitarist Ray DeTone is a man for all seasons. Or a man for all musical styles. And he's one who can play them all quite fluidly. With the new album, 'Guitar Noir', DeTone attacks not only his signature hard rock and metal background but also takes on funk, country, Middle Eastern and Latin music amongst others. "The ability to create with motivation from within developed from years of experience doing it ", DeTone relates. "Basically, I was commissioned to write 8 pieces of music per month for vignettes and short films for Soundtrack Solutions, TDM Productions and Playgirl TV. They started by giving me 2 to 3 word descriptions of what their highest production value director was looking for. For example, 'spaghetti western'... that helped me envision 'Spaghetti Score', which eventually ended up on Guitar Noir. "

And not only did all that work lead to Ray signing as writer with Omni Music but after hearing 'Guitar Noir', Grammy winning producer, Neil Dorfsman (Sting, Paul McCartney, Dire Straits) hired Ray to play guitar on his sessions; World Champion figure skater, Caroline Zhang, skated her short program to "Spanish Gypsy", another track from 'Guitar Noir' and Ray wound up gracing the stages of casinos & theatres around the U.S. backing up some of the biggest pop artists from China and the Dominican Republic. Ray has also been producing & guitaring for world renowned bassist, Mark Clarke, which led to a performance with rock legend, Billy Squier.

Obsessed with music from the time he was a toddler, Ray took up the accordion (at his parents behest) at the age of 7 and within a year ditched it for the most powerful of instruments - the guitar. He recalls, "I remember the strings seemed like they were a 1/2 inch off the neck and I thought I'd never be able to play it." Ray also recalls watching reruns of Hawaii 5-0. "...The Ventures had done the theme song , an instrumental surf guitar piece. I would walk to school thinking ' I'll NEVER be able to play that fast ! ' Funny, the 1st song I remember tweaking me to PLAY the guitar was also a Ventures tune, 'Walk, Don't Run' -- another instrumentalWow! I never realized that 'til now --my shrink would have a field day with that if I had one."

One of Ray's early music instructors was "Uncle" Vic Talerico, father of one Steven Tyler. " "Uncle Vic" was my high school music teacher and he was the coolest teacher in the school, not just because he was Steven Tyler's dad, but also because he GOT what we liked. He would bring Emerson, Lake & Palmer records to class because he liked the way they interpreted the classics."

Throughout the 80's Ray would make a name for himself as one of the guys to check out in the New York area and by the end of the decade he found himself touring the world with Mark Mangold's band Drive, She Said. Following the DSS jaunt Ray found himself in the company of former Iron Maiden frontman Paul Dianno (in the band Killers), then rock icon Ronnie Specter and in the orchestra pit of Jesus Christ Superstar. Artists and styles at complete opposite ends of the musical spectrum - and that's how Ray DeTone liked it.

"I grew up loving prog rock because it didn't have the same emotion and texture throughout the entire piece, like all short form pop and rock stuff did. I've always wanted to explore all the inner creations I heard not just the ones with heavy or bluesy guitar-- which still seems to be what i favor to perform live ..."

"As rock turned into commercial rock in the 80's I knew I'd only have the freedom to write all the different styles and arrangements I heard in my head AND find a market for it, was if I wrote for film. I went against all industry opinion and advice, when I decided to be eclectic. After doing so many sessions and always doing what was right for the artist, I felt it was time to paint with a broader brush and do whatever moved me, to follow whatever creative impulse I had, at the risk of not reaching a large audience."In other words", as Ray puts it, "I did it for me!" Some industry insiders told DeTone to find his niche - do the best blues record then come back with the best heavy record etc. "... There already is a best record in every style in every guitar lovers collection. I think my niche is that I'm the guy who can do all styles authentically...well, most of them anyway when I'm not mixing them all together!" , he laughs.

During the early 90s RDT spent most of his time in recording sessions in NYC working with the likes of David Rosenthal (Rainbow, Billy Joel), Hal Cragin (Iggy Pop), Alan St. Jon (Billy Squier) etc. while he continued to refine his "hook" writing skills with Words & Music compositions. This continues to be a staple in Ray's writing, even on his instrumental work. He writes songs with hooks, his guitar work is only part of the picture. The main focus is still the song!

Towards the end of the 90's Ray began work on his first solo album, Once More ... With Feeling!!! It met with high critical acclaim and instant respect, inspiring DeTone to head right back into the studio to begin work on his followup effort, Strange World. Adam Holzman (Miles Davis), Van Romaine (Steve Morse), Dave Keyes (Renaissance, Willy DeVille) and Marc Ensign (from the musical Rent) came along for the ride this time and once again, Ray's efforts were lauded with unwavering support from fans and the media alike.

Now, with 'Guitar Noir' upon us, Ray DeTone has hit his mark with his strongest album to date. From the soft, subtle intro that kicks off album opener "Lights Down" to the final, unlisted track, "Slowpoke" and it's home-on-the-range lazy afternoon feel, DeTone covers all the bases. Hitting funk metal ("Funk You Too!"), Spanish classical & flamenco ("Spanish Gypsy"), prog ("March Of Grind"). He even takes on pop music with "Twilight Suite" and hits the boards with balls out rockers "Zak Label" and "Dirty Sabbath."

What's next for Ray DeTone? "Well, I want to keep learning and obviously, working as much as possible," Ray says, with a grin. "I love working with all types of musicians and styles of music and I hope to broaden those opportunities in the future."

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