

Claude Gagne - Alright! We got Tom Gould of the Bossa-Nova beatniks visiting! If you have not heard them don't despair it's still not too late to save your musical soul.

**Tom Gould - Redemption is very cool.**

Hi Tom and welcome to the zine. Glad you could put down the bass long enough to share a few moments with us.

**I do love to play the bass. I thank you, Claude, for having me in.**

The band has quite an history (readers can find out all the details on your website) the latest incarnation sounds really solid and plays tight! Tori Mierlak has an amazing voice! At the risk of sounding sexist i'd say a real sexy voice too. Tim Stapleton does great work on percussions and the only one in the band whose initial does not begin with "T," George Vahamonde really nails the beat right on! on drums. I know that's not a question but i just had to say it; I hope I did not make you feel too uncomfortable?



**Not a bit of it. I feel the same way about those guys. The night we spent in Pennsylvania at WVIA studios recording our Moon Unit Live CD was an experience I will always remember fondly. All the qualities of my fellow Beatniks were in fine form that night and captured on tape.**

Let's talk about the "Flyboy & The Rhythm Bandits" CD, using that Halloween kids' picture was surprising when I first seen it then listening to the cd I thought "how appropriate!" You do sound like you are just out having fun. Can you tell us a bit about the picture?

**About a year ago or so, the mother of the little boy in the lower right hand corner and the girl diagonally across from him sent my mother a copy of that picture because every time she would show it to people they would laugh. I took one look at it and said this is a CD cover photo I will have to use some day. This CD that now is that cover was put together from bits and pieces from my musical journey leading me to the whole Bossa Nova Beatnik experience that is now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year. My first band was called the Rhythm Bandits, named by my friend Marc. The song "Always Be With Me" was from that time. I have a lot of songs in that style that I have yet to record. With the response I am getting I could see doing a whole CD with those tunes. I want to do a CD of Jerry Dugger singing all the leads. Perhaps the two would mix well. So anyroad, one of the advantages of living in the New York Area is interacting with the great number of very talented people who are there all the time. I had the privilege and the good fortune to get many of the cool people I have into a recording situation. Drew Zing, Danny Wilensky, Jim Beard, Jono Manson, Jerry Dugger. All top notch New York City musicians. It is a ridiculous feeling to be sitting in the control booth of a recording studio and hear the tracks these guys were laying down and being glad that the tape was rolling and ecstatic that it was going to be part of my production. That is fun. Mix in some homegrown Long Island cats and you have a wild scene. Clowns and Crazy People. After many incarnations of the Rhythm Bandits I took some time off. Some months. I saw George at a party. We remembered how good it was playing together and decided to put a band together. I had recently found out that I have the same birthday as Charles Lindbergh and since I lived in St. Louis once, I thought I would evoke that spirit and call us the Flyboys. Jono was the first guitar player for the**

**Flyboys, which evolved into Bob, Eddie, George, and I. One day at practice, Rob O'Rourke got up to the mic and said, "And now for the Bossa Nova Beatnik sound of Tom Gould." One of the great things about hanging with the O'Rourke brothers is their ability to pull things out of the air. We would be riding home in the van and one of them would be Cary Grant and the other would be Jimmy Stewart. At first I felt that I couldn't call myself Bossa Nova anything because I don't sound like Jobim whose sound I love. Then I found out about Bossa Nova. It was music that didn't play by any known rules. It was Jazz and Blues Bossafied. Well, that's just about right then. I follow no known rules and I like to mix it up stylistically. Yeh, I took one look at that photo and could see that I was born a ham. And as I thought about doing an album of songs from the Flyboys and from the Rhythm Bandits and saw how my childhood friend, George, looked like he was dressed as a Bandit, it made sense to use the photo and call the CD "Flyboy & The Rhythm Bandits" a Bossa Nova Beatnik production.**

As a writer and poet I wish I had written "Feel the love in these troubled time" and "Go with the flow, stay out of your own way" inside the insert is great!!! Do you write the lyrics?

**Yes. As a matter of fact, the backing track on that song is the band and the song we were about to do in practice when Bob named us Bossa Nova Beatniks forevermore. That's Bob for you. When I came across these backing tracks without the vocals from years ago, I was blown away by what cool musicians they were and in earlier recordings I didn't give the musicianship a chance to flourish amidst all my words and arrangements. That's when I arrived at the philosophy of trying to stay out of my own way. I tried to write as little as possible lyrically so that if you are someone like me who loves passionate and at times crazed guitar playing, you can satisfy the need. "Fly with Me (Bone Daddy)" hardly uses any words at all and some of them aren't even words.**

What is for you the hardest part of creating?

**My initial response is that there is no hardest part. The joy of creativity is that it takes you, you follow it. When it comes you have to scramble to get it all down. For the most part that is true. All my favorite songs have felt like they were from somewhere else and by doing certain things as a musician I can get to a place where the song will form. Sometimes the song almost makes it out. I have a song that is close to 20 years old that I love except for one line. I guess that is the answer to your question. The hardest part of creating is trying to finish that song.**

What is, in your opinion, most exciting in today's music scene?

**Ozomatli. Their two albums both jump off the disc and take you in a hundred different directions. I like eclectic. When each new track is a surprise, that's entertainment. I just saw Ozomatli play in a club in Massachusetts. The place was jumpin'. As a result of Ozomatli, I have discovered Jurassic Five. Chali 2Na has got the best voice. Other great CD's from this year are Patty Smith's "Land" collection and Elvis Costello's "When I Was Cruel." "Episode of Blonde" is my favorite song of late.**

What are you reading these days?

**I am reading the United States Constitution and Court cases interpreting the clauses.**

Do you have a special cause or social issue you devote time too?

**I have many concerns that I address in a number of ways from straight donation to taking part in fund raising events. I used to take part in an Elvis Presley tribute night for World Hunger Year. I heard today that Elvis impersonators in Vegas are now being paid \$650 a day. That's a hunka hunka burnin' love. I believe that education is the highest priority. If we would take the time to make teaching our**

**children the exciting and rewarding experience it should be then we would turn out intelligent people with the ability to figure out the solutions to all the other problems.**

What or who inspired you to choose the bass as your instrument?

**My older brothers. They had an acoustic duo that played the Pocono's every weekend of the summer when I was a kid. I couldn't play the guitar or sing. I joined the school orchestra so I could borrow a stand up bass and play along with my brothers. PA systems weren't like they are today and my bass could never be heard, so it didn't matter that I didn't know how to play. For doing two fifteen minute sets while the dance band took a break at the Saturday night welcome dance, we were put up and fed from Friday night to Sunday every weekend at a great resort on a lake. It was as much fun as it sounds.**

Of all your songs catalog, which is your special song?

**The creative process is so cool every time. At the time a song is written it feels like the greatest song ever. Two minutes later you may trash it for a number of good reasons, but for that instant when you realize that there is now a song that didn't exist two minutes ago, it feels great. You are reacting to the feeling of creation and not necessarily what is being created. So the songs that do stick for whatever reason, all started out with that energized feeling. I am certainly extra fond of songs that work on stage. My most consistent song has been Jack Jack (which is Feel the Love in New Jack City only with different words). Papa La Ska has done the best on the Internet. Fly in The Ointment is my current favorite. I started thinking of others and most of them have been someone's favorite. Red Red Johnny, Fingers In The Cake, No Better Thing, Ack Ack, Behave Yourself, Let Me Out. Ask me this same question tomorrow and there will be a different list of songs.**

Is there one musician you have not played with but would love to jam with?

**Carlos Santana.**

Thank you so much for sharing these moments with us any parting words?

**Tend to your soul. Time on this Earth is brief. Your life force is forever. Will your energy be positive or negative when you shed the mortal coil? Peace like a river flows. Go with the flow. Notice the eleven eleven's in your life.**

I invite you to visit one of the best band websites I have seen <http://www.bnbeatniks.com>

Send your comments to: tom@bnbeatniks.com

~~~~~Zinerview end~~~~~

Thanks again for participating

I will need permission to use pics from your site  
and if you wish i can host one of your song on the jukebox  
and will also need permission to do so.

**You have my permission to do both of those. Tom Gould**

Claude