

Richard Bona Interview With Johnny De Marco

Johnny: Here we go...

Richard: Yeah, man...

Johnny: Alright, Richard- hey, man, I'm Johnny De Marco, here, for Roland and Boss- thanks so much for such a great show downstairs, man...

Richard: Thanks for calling me.

Johnny: That was excellent, man, just amazing- uh, Richard, congrats on your new release- I'm holding up a Bass Player magazine, and your new release, T?, -and your on the cover- so that's gotta be happening, now ... like I say, the show was amazing, uh, where does the tour go next- are you guys headed up north?

Richard: We're going to Monterey...

Johnny: Monterey, eh...

Richard: ... and, after that we're going to Anna Corpus (?)... and after that we're going for a month and a half to Europe...

Johnny: ... and where were you before this...

Richard: ... we went to South Africa before this... South America, then we did Europe for about two months, - we did about fifteen days in South America...

Johnny: Wow, pretty crazy- a lot of planes...

Richard: Lotta planes, lotta planes...

Johnny: So, Richard, I was looking at your stage, and I saw all kinds of Roland gear, man- Roland and Boss gear...

Richard: That's right..

Johnny: You've been playing it for a while...

Richard: Yeah, man, uh the GR-20, and the V-Bass(?)... y'know ...

Johnny: ... and the guitar synth...

Richard: Yeah, the guitar synth...

Johnny: ... I saw how you bring it in- how you open with the flute – y'know that flute solo

You were doing...

Richard: Yeah, that's a part on the GR-20... y'know, you set up a few parts there – you have to spend some time, there, you know, to set them up...

Johnny: Yeah, oh, yeah- and I saw how you don't always have them on, but you bring them in and out..

Richard: Yeah, in and out- I don't always use them, like, everyw here- it's always as a complement.. to the music...

Johnny: That's cool..

Richard: ... bringing them in from time to time, and not having them in there all the time... ,

'cause I already have a keyboard player..

Johnny: Yeah, very, very expressive, man.

Richard: That's the interview, that is THE INTERVIEW (Johnny laughs)... man, what is this- is this an MP3?

Johnny: Yeah, it's recording MP3 right now ... that's Roland, too...

Richard: Roland makes this?... and I don't have one!?!... I think I'm gonna go on strike!

Johnny: (laughs) We're gonna get you one (laughs again), we'll get you one, man- Yeah, Roland makes that.. but I also saw some Boss pedals--you had the new Boss, uh, expression volume pedal..

Richard: Yeah...

Johnny: Ok...

Richard: It's great, it's great..

Johnny: You like that.. ok...

Richard: It's great, because, y'know, you can really control your sound... it's smooth, and

when I unplug my base, there's no noise.

Johnny: You also had a DD3, or is it a DD5?

Richard: It's a DD3 - I use it as a limiter, but I didn't use it tonight, but sometimes, in some rooms, I need...

Johnny: What's the other pedal, a limiter?

Richard: ... a delay, yeah, I use it, y'know when I solo, I use delay behind the song.

Johnny: Y'know, when you're singing, and some of the combinations, when you're bringing in the gear and you're singing and you're playing your regular bass with your Roland bass, THE Bass- wow, I mean, see, I've seen a lot of people use the gear, but not quite like you- no one uses it quite like you.

Richard: That's because I've been using it a long time! (laughs) I'm like a Roland guy, now! (he and Johnny both laugh). That's why they take good care of me at Roland - no, really, they take good care of me.

Johnny: That's for sure... congratulations on the new release...

Richard: Thanks a lot. I'm really happy, y'know, everything is going well..

Johnny: ... Man, you're all over the world, man...

Richard: ... You have to, you have to go all around the world... otherwise it's not happening-
You know how it is these days- that's why we tour a lot.

Johnny: I was reading the articles about you, and you were saying how people in different countries get excited differently, y'know, like in Africa, right away, people dance, you know, and here in America, there's a different vibe, and maybe that's a little limiting to express yourself here, in the mainstream music, but how do you like to come here in L. A. and Santa Monica, and getting your crowd in here, and getting to do what you do?

Richard: It's good - It's good to come here time to time - but it's really hard to tour in U.S., to tell you the truth. - to get a band in U. S. to tour is not real easy, because, y'know, especially when you tour in Asia or in Europe, you get unbelievable treatment, but when you tour in the U.S., you don't get that treatment. When it comes to art, I gotta say it's too bad this country doesn't consider... it's not only me, but other guys, like my friends, like jazz guys I know - they don't tour the U.S.

Johnny: Why do you think the U.S. is like that?

Richard: I don't know ... maybe, first of all... the pollution that we get from the music from the U.S. – everything that you hear in the U.S. is so polluted that many people don't..

Johnny: ... Polluted with bad music?

Richard: Yeah, they don't play good music anymore- everything has to be loud- you go to a restaurant, you don't even pay attention anymore- we don't pay attention anymore. Everything is the same beat- everything has to be loud- people in the restaurant are screaming- you don't see people talking anymore. We're eating and we don't even pay attention anymore.

Johnny: You think that hurts the people ?

Richard: Of course. Today, you go someplace, and you play regular drum, people will look at you like... because they're not used to that sound- they know the drum, but they don't expect the drum to sound like that..

Johnny: That's a big problem here in America, because people don't know . Maybe they'll see your article or talk to you, and that'll make them aware of it.

Richard: Oh, I don't have any confidence there. It should start with the media, first of all, y'know , it has to start up here at the top, y'know , has to start with the powerful. The government has to have , first of all, has to try to get music to the people, but they don't do that here...

Johnny: ... How about Africa? ... It's a different thing, huh?...

Richard: ... I don't see any difference, actually, between Africa and America when it comes to having a culture... It's unbelievable, whereas, when you go to Germany where, y'know , art is important for those guys – it's really important for them to support.

Johnny: I get the sense... you've been all over the world- you're in touch with people- you're not just a bass player- you're not only a bass player- you're a singer, a musician, but you're also in touch with the people from all over the world- I think you're much more than a musician.

Richard: You have to be- at a certain level, you have to be, y'know , you can't just be playing music and that's it- you have to share something, give something to the people- you have to share something... give people something- that's how we get people to

come see us-these people keep coming to see us, because they expect something from you, and that's what you give them ...

Johnny: ... Just your glow on stage- all you guys- all the guys in your band, they were just glowing, y'know, and it started with you- when you came out - that energy was around you...

Richard: You have to! It's contagious!

Johnny: It is contagious- you had the whole crowd feeling it, man.

Richard: It was the crowd, the musicians, the pretty girls, (all laugh) (followed by some musical doodling by Richard).

Johnny: Richard, thanks for talking to me, man. It was such a pleasure to meet you.

Richard: Thanks so much, my brother- next time bring your guitar, let's play, man.

Johnny: I will, I will, uh, can you sign the cover for me?

Richard: Yeah (enthusiastically).

Johnny: Awesome!

Lady: (She asks about the Roland magazine ?)

Johnny: The magazine? Oh, you can buy that anywhere, it's on every corner. Richard, if you need any help directly in America, we'll take care of you- we'll get you whatever you need...

Richard: De Marco ! Are you Italian?

Johnny: (laughs) Yes- Italian, and Irish (laughs)...

Richard: Ah, Italian and Irish, that's it..

Lady: That's a nice combination...

Richard: You tell Peter, I'm serious, I would love to have one of those MP3 recorders- this is perfect..

Johnny: Yes, that would be great! You know what I do with this thing? I talk my ideas on it.

Y'know, when I think of a melody, I sing in it, y'know, so I won't forget it- it's always there.

Richard: I do that on my telephone... so, I leave myself a message (all laugh)

Johnny: Oh, that works too! (laughs)

Johnny: My pleasure to speak with ya tonightyou played a wonderful show. Thank You . Good luck to you on your worldly travels.

Richard: My pleasure to play and talk to everyone tonight. I'll see you the next time around. - Peace to the world. - Richard









