

Questions to Manu Katché

Question: You are a member of jury in a television game to select some young stars. What do you remember of this experience? Do you believe that it is a good method to hand over to the youth the desire to play music?

Response: I think today, it is more and more difficult to get in contact with a record company and eventually sign a record deal. So I guess this is a way to earn some years of queuing for nothing, of course the fact that cameras are running all the time makes the whole project different, some people come just for the fame of being showed on TV, otherwise, the little bit of educational aspect I give through this program works, after each seasons, I am not surprised to see old contestants, coming back to me, and asking me about their new demos, or production
Another fact quite important too, this program allows me to talk about being a musician and about Jazz, which on Prime Time TV is very rare.

Question: You succeeded in reconciling the fans of Jazz and Pop music (the creative Pop music at least). Very few musicians can boast about being good in binary and in ternary, to play with some singers such as Francis Cabrel, Michel Jonasz, Sting, to play with the Bee Gees, Dire Straits, and to be leader of an instrumental band, while signing with the prestigious ECM label. What is the secret, the quality a musician must have to excel and adjust with as much cleverness to different artistic situations?

Response: Each musician is a human being, with a unique sensitivity, there is no secret to succeed or to make a career, I guess you have to follow your emotion your instinct and your feeling, this is actually what I did since I started in the music. The great thing for me is that I have been able to prove that I was able to be creative in different music styles, but my approach has never been easy, I always tried to bring more than I was asked for, even if in some occasions, the artist wasn't ready for it... The principal aspect in a musical life is to trust yourself as much as you can, and the result of many experiences help you in providing the best from your heart and soul!!

Question: To what extent has your collaboration in 1990 with Jan Garbarek for ECM been outstanding?

Response: The funny side of it is that I have been introduced to ECM with a pop record.

M Eicher, head of ECM Germany was driving his car and heard on the radio a rock track that he liked, so he pulled over and listened to the end of it until the radio host announced who it was, so the next day he went to buy the record: Robbie Robertson, first solo album, and listened to that track he liked: (Somewhere down the crazy river). Then he spoke with Jan Garbarek and proposed him to try an album with me on the drums, so once again, I was able to come in with my own experience and in no cases I had to prove that I was a jazz player,

(This could be also part of the answer to the previous question)

I just had to be a drummer and that's all. It's been now 10 years that I joined this label as a sideman, and that was enough time to feel comfortable with this company, finally I asked Manfred Eicher to produce my first instrumental album, which he accepted without any question.

Question: Do you think that your open-mindedness finds its origins in your education: Are you miscegenous. Your father is from Côte d'Ivoire, your mother is

French and you grew up in the French suburbs...

Response: Of course, I think education is the fundament of a lifetime and for any kind of work and achievement.

I didn't know my father; I've been brought up with my mother and grand parents.

I guess education plus love gives you a pretty good behavior and confidence, which help your approach and position regarding people and life.

Question: How did you get the desire to play the drums. Was it an unconscious return to the African sources?

Response: I remember when I was a kid watching TV and suddenly I saw a band playing live, I cannot remember who it was at the time, but I was so impressed that I decided to do the same as this guy moving behind his drums. Of course having half of African blood in my genes makes sense that rhythm was certainly ready in my body to come out but I wouldn't say that was a return to the sources, just a part of it used and mixed with my classical background, jazz, pop and rock experiments..