

Desorden Público

Desorden Público are a household name in Venezuela, not only have they been around for 16 years, they have been idolised by not only ska fans but “regular” music lovers in Venezuela and South America.

“Desorden Público is more than a family business; the band is each member’s passion, job, hobby and their party time! In the end we haven’t had so many changes. For our ‘day’ jobs, we have a dentist, two graphic designers (one of them is chief art director for Warner Channel in Latin America), and two journalists. Some of us have radio shows, and organize parties and concerts in Caracas (Venezuela’s capital city). The usual Desorden gigs take place on weekends, so it doesn’t collide with ‘day’ jobs. For tours, we ask for vacations or special permission. In the end, we manage to get to it” Caplis, the bass player admits.

The band’s name arose as a way to satirize the Venezuelan National Guard’s public order vans. “The National Guard is the police of the army. By the time that Desorden begun, we were part of the Punk scene in Caracas (our Capital city), and being a guy with mohawk, military boots, hats, and all that stuff- we were a very shocking ideology for these men with minds so square (typical G.I’s). It was the worst of the nightmares to run into them. Their trucks were called “ORDEN PUBLICO”, and our name wanted to be just the opposite. They are the order, we the DISORDER)” Caplis explains, whilst he raises an eye brow or two.

“Desorden Público’ the first album sold 43 thousand just in Venezuela, then our second effort (‘En Descomposicion’), didn’t make it as well as our first one, and it was about 16000 copies in our country. In 1994 our third album ‘Canto Popular de la vida y Muerte’ was a massive success, and taking into account that Venezuelan market was hit by a slump, it was a great step forward for us, the fact of selling more than 30,000 copies. ‘Canto Popular’ went gold and ‘Plomo Revienta’ went Platinum and ‘Diablo’ is almost triple platinum! These figures are just in Venezuela, other countries where we have sold a significant numbers are Puerto Rico and Mexico.” Caplis proudly announces, and then continues “Although our albums have been released in Central America, Colombia, Spain, USA, Peru and Argentina, unfortunately they received very poor promotional work from our former label (SONY).”

Many Australian bands dream of touring the US and Europe even once, touring costs normally are too high for the average band. Going against the norm Desorden Público have been fortunate to tour these places many times. “It’s been a long and hard work. We didn’t count on Internet, but we always kept contact with the international ska scene (fanzines, small labels) and made good friends there. Thanks to these links, we appeared on some ska compilations via our own ground work, and then the first offerings for gigs arrived. Due to our local success, we managed to pay for our international tours, this was really a big effort (we didn’t count on our label to support us). We and Venezuelan audiences, to see in Caracas (Venezuelan capital), **The Toasters** with their best line up in their history (the NY Fever line up). It was in 1993 and the Toasters were the first International Ska band to come to our country. Later this same year we travelled for the first time to USA, invited by The Toasters for a mini tour in the east coast. Since that time The Toasters and Desorden keep a very good relationship, and I even ran Moon Records Latin for more than 7 years here in Venezuela. Talking about some stories of good times with the Toasters I remember that Sledge (the Trumpet player) was very interested in learning Spanish. The main phrase he wanted to know was, “How do you say ‘Fuck Me’ in Spanish??” Which is ‘Cojeme’ and that was his ‘Warcry’ and the only thing we could hear from Sledge, beside his amazing trumpet” Caplis recalls and bursts out laughing. “Besides these shows with The Toasters, another bands which we’ve played and have had a good time are **Bim Skala Bim, Loaded, Maroon Town, The Hi-Hats, Scofflaws, Pilfers, Fermin Muguza, Os Paralamas, Do Sucesso, Dancehall Crashers, NY Ska Jazz Ensemble** and without have played with them, I must to mention that we are friends of the fantastic **Tokyo Ska Paradise Orchestra**. In fact two of us had the pleasure to meet them and hang out in Tokyo!” Caplis excitedly reveals.

Caplis rare Desorden Público memorabilia includes the only copy of a soundtrack for a Taiwanese movie (The Lonely Hearts Club- CD format) that includes one of their songs (Postizo, from their third record), that must be something hard to find. Danel and Caplis admit to saving lots of photographs, videos, live recordings, flyers, posters, etc.

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