

Indian Larry, Tafoya and the Muse by Kenn Hartmann

Legendary rocker Michael Tafoya claims to be in the Muse. Perhaps he's discovered a connection to the ancient Greeks and the young nymphs who presided over the eloquent arts of poetry and music. Muse were the daughters of Zues and Mnemosyne (which shouldn't be too difficult to pronounce for Wisconsin readers from Manitowoc or Mukwonago). Taken literally it would mean he was in any one of the virginal daughters of the Greek Gods, but most contemporary folk prefer to think of the Muse as a sublime spirit, a source of genius, a moment of inspiration. Almost every artist, writer, poet, musician at one time or other, seeks the Muse. Think of it this way; Discovery Channel's OCC boys occasionally seek the Muse for inspiration, but a lot of what they build is determined by corporate considerations. Still, OCC's Paul Jr. has had some very inspired moments, but they appear to be based on availability of advertising dollars. Contrast that with Indian Larry who lived his whole life in the Muse. Larry's every moment – awake or asleep embraced that vast biker ethos. He appeared shrouded in it. That awe inspired aura swirled about Indian Larry from the back alley to center stage. Even his death, while precariously poised upon a motorcycle, is testament to his devotion to a life throttled to the max. Who among us hasn't contemplated our own mortality? How many decrepit old codgers laid out on their death beds don't wish for that one last free ride, to blast into the glorious blaze of eternity? You've heard the saying, 'I want to die laughing like my grandfather, not screaming like the passengers in his car.' So as I describe Michael Tafoya's relation to rock and roll, you'll understand where this is headed.

Living in the Muse is fantastic for the artistic quest but tends to wreak havoc with any other element in one's life – like relationships, jobs, rent. Also, the general populace may not recognize an artist's talent no matter how steeped in the Muse. A few years ago at Sturgis, I happened upon the OCC booth as it was being erected and a crowd flocked eagerly seeking autographs. At that very moment, I spied Indian Larry slipping past unnoticed. Most likely the way Larry preferred. At the OCC booth was Vinny, an accomplished mechanic and the young pup, Cody, the apprentice. Both cool dudes. But seriously, who would you rather give props to? Hell, I can go congratulate my own damn mechanic and not stand in line. Especially with one of the truly great builders of all time right there. Indian Larry was old school but he wasn't old fashioned. Legendary rocker Michael Tafoya is more akin to Indian Larry or Billy Lane than the corporate shills who flout a few superficial skills. Tafoya is the real deal. I first heard Tafoya when he was in the band 'The Boyzz.' Of course, on tour their road name was 'The Boyzz from Illinois.' If you lived in northern Illinois or Southern Wisconsin back in the mid seventies and were into motorcycles and music, it's virtually impossible to have not heard of the Boyzz

from Illinois. Their album cover (that's right, black vinyl 'Too Wild to Tame' also released on 8-track) featured a quasi Marlon Brando type pose by one of the band members astride a bagger in what looked to be a deserted mining town, but actually was main street Dundee. The Boyzz played at places like the Edgewater in Twin Lakes, Hooker Lake in Salem, the Brat Stop and Rocket North. Tafoya's next band was the B'zz featuring Tom Holland from Steppenwolf and also Steve Riley who played with LA Guns. They were the only unsigned act to ever play on American Bandstand. Tafoya went to work as Regional Sales Manager for Gibson guitars. He never strayed from music, kept working on his chops and continued to hone his virtuoso skills. As time passed, a lot of the 70's bands started to resurrect themselves on the oldies circuit to cash in on their earlier fame. But this easy route didn't sit well with Tafoya. He wanted to create a fresh sound, to breathe a new life into a new band, and like Indian Larry, Tafoya is old school but not old fashioned. He still pays tribute to his roots, but he does it as sincere homage, not to make a quick buck off of nostalgia – think of a guy who assembles bikes with store bought parts as opposed to the artist who fabricates his own. Tafoya creates his own. The band Tafoya's Lost Boyzz consists of Chris McCoy on drums and Eric Osland on bass, and has just completed work on a ten song CD called 'Life.'

Listen, Tafoya is not American Idol material, no way shape or form. It's pure and from the heart. No phony gimmicks litter the aural landscape. Tafoya's been down the road to perdition and back, a survivor. Listening to the title track, I laugh aloud, the same spontaneous joy I feel when riding the highway and all worldly cares fade away in the face of God's own breath brushing against my cheeks. Track 8 'Sturgis' is a Santana-like tribute to the open road, very emotional, evocative. The lyrical refrain is 'I'm in a Sturgis state of mind.' The album isn't a collection of songs stuck together, it's more of a concept, a journey. Tafoya is a bona fide master of the guitar. Nothing fake, just that surreal dexterity that kindles the flames like an acetylene torch burning through heavy metal. Sparks fly. Wear goggles. More information is at tafoya-lostboyzz.com.



Michael Tafoya with guitar

I realize the hardcore reader's of FRP understand this, but for the casuals I need to say, don't be like sheep standing in line for OCC when Indian Larry's nearby. And folks, the spirit of Indian Larry is always nearby. With that in mind, here are a couple places to see Tafoya's Lost Boyzz. On Saturday Dec 3, the Brother's Rising MC Toys for Tots at the Puerto Rican Social Club, 150 S. Sheridan in Waukegan, IL. There'll be a couple of full dress marines and dudes with patches from a multitude of different clubs. I know Preacher has discussed this before: about lame taverns that don't allow patch holders that still claim to be biker bars. Well, this is very friendly gathering for a good cause and an opportunity to see all the glorious colors flying in full regalia. Everyone is welcome; it's a very cool party that goes from noon until midnight. Tafoya performs around 10PM. On Dec 16, Friday night Demito Time, 335 E Kenilworth in downtown Villa Park, IL will be rocking. Friday night at Demito's is always rocking, but Tafoya's Lost Boyzz will be showcasing their talent. In fact, our fearless editor, Preacher was at Demito's when this gig was booked. A few of the crew from Wildfire Harley make this joint a regular stop. Demito's is located down the street from the old Ovaltine factory. Some of the girls who work the bar also work the biker circuit from Daytona, to Sturgis, to Laconia.

-Kenn Hartmann - www.chicagobikerbars.com

Independent motorcycle shops providing the latest and the greatest in parts, service and accessories for today's distinguishing biker who's tired of the rubber stamp look.

The Independent Shop Association
www.ISAinfo.com

I S A

Members of:
The Motorcycle Riders Foundation

Are you a bit different?
Want to be?
Check out the shops listed in this publication to show the world who you really are!

The Independent Shop Association is supported by the law office of:
Eisenberg, Weigel, Carlson, Blau & Clemens, S.C.
3732 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53208

Providing a specialized Motorcycle Accident Team for your needs.
Medical Doctor, Private Investigators, Engineer, Paralegals and Attorneys.

If you're in an accident, don't hesitate to call the law office that does so much to support your rights as a biker and works the hardest at getting you the compensation you deserve when you have been injured by the actions of others.

Supporters of the "Run to the Wall"
A Memorial weekend ride to the
VNVM in Washington DC as part of
"Rolling Thunder"

1-800-486-0106
Member of ABATE of Wis.

Secure Bike Storage Available

**NEINFELDT
CYCLE**

423-1903

4811 Plover Road Wisconsin Rapids, WI
MON - Friday 9 AM - 6 PM SAT 9 AM - 1 PM CLOSED SUNDAY

"Specializing in Harley Davidson Repair"

COMPLETE SHOWROOM • FULL LINE OF PARTS AND ACCESSORIES
LICENSED MOTORCLOTHES • USED AND CONSIGNMENT HARLEY DAVIDSONS
LEATHERS • BIKE STORAGE • CAR PORTS

AUTHORIZED DEALER FOR

CUSTOM CHROME DRAG Specialties