

GENTLEMEN'S AVENUE

Modern Men of Tradition and Distinction

Reb Kennedy: An Authentically Wild Gentleman

Posted on [January 22, 2013](#)

Gentlemen,

I walked around a local venue called The Observatory and noticed a Gentleman standing off to the side with an intense look in his eyes like a hawk perched in a tree examining his territory. The stage and band were in his eyesight and he looked over the crowd as if he was measuring their response to the music. A few young musicians that previously performed approached and his demeanor changed. A few smiles were passed around along with handshakes but as



soon as the musicians left the Gentleman once again intensely examined the stage and crowd. The Gentleman looked like he could spit into the wind and it would keep on going. I am referring to the founder of the energetic and diverse Wild Records, Reb Kennedy.

The Kennedy family moved from Dublin, Ireland to London where they had a child named Reb. The first 6 years of Reb's life were spent in London. Later the family moved back to Dublin where Reb spent his formative years, from age 6-20 years old. According to Reb, growing up, "there were not a lot of choices: being in a gang was not for me, football I was a pretty good goalkeeper but not for me or music and I grew up in a house with music playing all the time (Roy Orbison, Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis) so music was the only thing for me." Not only was there music playing in the Kennedy household but also in local pubs. The young boy was influenced by music on all sides "I always liked going to the pub with my mum and dad and all kids do it in Ireland and there was always people singing and bands playing."

Living in an environment of vibrant and passionate music greatly influenced

Reb and planted the seeds for his future.

When Reb was 12 years old his passion for music increased when he started to purchase records. He was determined to buy records and would save his pocket money (allowance) "until I could buy the records I wanted" says Reb. Some

of his early records were Elvis, T Rex, David Bowie, Glitter Band, Kinks, Small Faces and Yardbirds. His musical taste was diverse and growing along with his record collection as he constantly searched for new and energetic music.

At the age of 20 Reb moved back to London and immersed himself in the music scene. His musical influences came from “many areas, I love rockabilly music and also love soul, gospel, UK first wave punk, ska, and 60’s R&B” says Reb. After 16 years in London the music scene was changing so he decided to cross the pond and move to San Francisco, California. According to Reb, “I came to the U.S. in 2000 and left London because the scene had become stale and old, no young blood and no young bands.” In San Francisco Reb began promoting shows with Rockabilly legends such as Hayden Thompson, Joe Clay, Narvel Felts and Dale Hawkins. It was not long before Reb wanted new and energetic music.

Reb spent a few weekends each month traveling to Los Angeles looking for something new and energized. He was “looking for the spark and found it with a young band called Lil Luis y Los Wildteens.” The next individual that caught his attention was “the mighty Omar Romero.” He decided to start booking local bands and created a promotions company called Wild Promotion. As with all things in Reb’s life he seemed to push the boundaries because after promoting these young energetic bands one year later he created a record label. Wild promotions “became Wild Records and this just seemed to fit the sound and energy, I wanted to be Wild.” The record label gave young energetic bands a chance to record their music.

Since the record label began in 2001 Wild Records has released 40-CD’s, 25-45’s, 1 12-inch record, 1-LP and 1-DVD. The record label’s motto should not be surprising, “The Wildest Sounds Around”. Wild Records is diverse and brilliantly recorded by producer Reb and head studio engineer Omar Romero. During 2013 Wild Records will stop producing

CD’s, they will focus on vinyl records and digital downloads. The decision to produce vinyl records is partly based on Reb’s love for the best and original sound available.

Don’t expect to find any lollipop or time capsule music on this label, Wild Records sound is very real and explosive. Wild Records has many different genres but are not restrained by them. Each band is unique and has the Wild Sound. Here are a few examples of the genre diversity and Wild sound: Rockabilly-Omar & The Stringpoppers, 50’s

Rock and Roll-Hi Strung Ramblers, Soul- Gizzelle & Alex Vargas, Blues-Little Victor, Surf-Barbwires, Rock and Roll- The Dragtones, Punk- The Black Mambas, 60’s Garage- The Hurricanes and Neumans. The Wild Family has about 17 performers with youth on their side because most of them are in their early to mid 20’s. Reb is constantly looking for new talent and every three months they hold auditions and receive numerous demo tapes and email inquires.



The bands on Wild Records are not restrained to the U.S. because they travel the world spreading the “Wildest Sounds Around”. According to Reb, “I think the demand is high because we are not just about 1950’s music but are about raw energy with a honest no bullshit sound that seems to be lacking in music at this time and I think people want good tough guitar driven Rock and Roll.” In 2013 Wild musicians will perform in Australia, England, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, France, Ireland, Holland, Germany, and Italy.

It is not surprising that Reb’s earliest memory of music involves family. According to Reb it was, “Sunday mornings and the smell of Sunday dinner cooking and music playing on the record player.” The Wild Records label is commonly referred to as the Wild Family because Reb has a relationship with the performers that goes beyond recording, shows, and touring; “we are called the Wild Family and this is how I run the label. Sometimes we help pay rent and get people out of jail. The band members come to me with all types of problems that I help sort out and I book shows for them (I never take a fee for booking bands)... promote them and not only deal with music but I am also part of there daily lives as well.”

The uniqueness of the Wild Family caught the attention of director/producer Elise Salomon who co-produced the movie *Smashed* that premiered successfully at the Sundance Film Festival. A film crew followed Reb for 9 months and produced a documentary called *Los Wild Ones*. The Wild Family is not related by blood or common ancestry, instead they are bound by their profound passion for music and loyalty to each other. Occasionally Reb has a Wild Family dinner and I can only imagine it like the ones he had as a child but instead of having music playing on records in the background the performers are part of his Wild Records Family. Reb understands the responsibility to the Wild Family is not just developing new and energetic music.

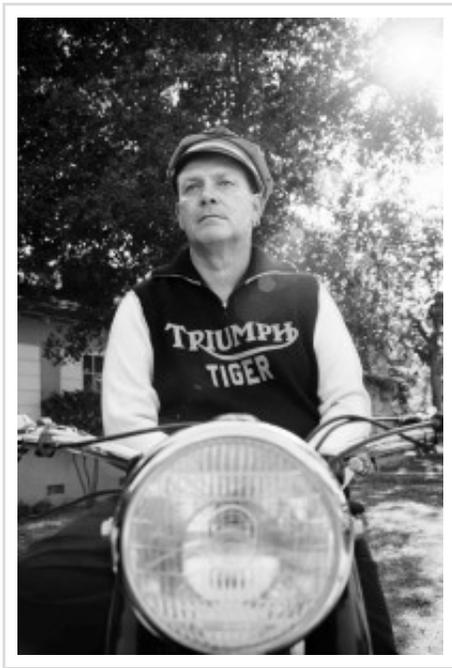


There is something sacred about music for Reb and the energy of the music fuels the journey that started in London and Ireland. Reb’s reverence for music is best demonstrated in his description of the sound of a record playing, “a needle touches the record and the sound that this makes can’t ever be equaled because the needle grabs the soul from the sound.” While Reb Kennedy is not a perfect man I believe he has a profoundly deep soul and is not reckless or destructive.

The story of Reb Kennedy and Wild Records is about a Gentleman who is deeply moved by music and at the core authentically Wild. Reb is Wild because he does not allow restraints and boundaries to control the energy and passion of the music. Moreover, Reb’s impact upon Wild Records cannot be calculated because some of these young artists will pursue other ventures and have families of their own one day but will always have the Wild Family lineage.

Photos courtesy of Wild Records photographer Daniel Funaki

Wild Records online:



Mr. M

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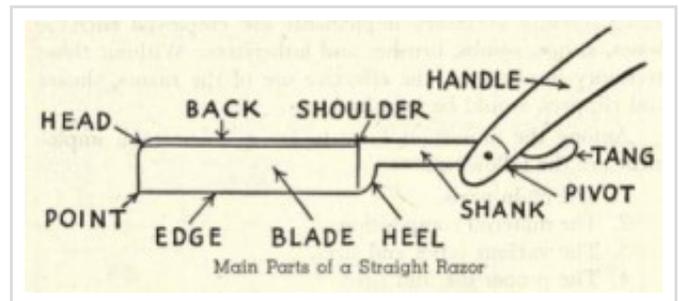
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The Craft Of Straight Razor Shaving, Schorem Haarsnijder En Barbier Part II

Posted on [January 15, 2013](#)

Gentlemen,

The importance of shaving can be traced all the way back to the Pharaohs of Egypt where archeologist have discovered copper and gold razors in their tombs. The razors were placed in the Pharaoh's tomb to make sure they would be well groomed in the afterlife (sometimes their barbers were also buried with them!). Shaving is one thing that all Gentlemen will have to address, either grow a beard or shave. The craft of straight razor shaving has changed very little in the last few centuries and quality barbers are continuing the tradition.



Master Barber Bertus of Schorem Haarsnijder En Barbier in Rotterdam, Netherlands is well versed in the craft of straight razor shaving and teamed up with Gentlemen's Avenue to produce this article. The founders of Schorem,