

## Seatbelt and the Pecking Order at the Taste in San Pedro

It was a warm day with a slight breeze on this late afternoon at "The Taste in San Pedro," when local rockabilly band, Seatbelt and the Pecking Order, took the stage. They played with exuberant abandon in front of the near packed crowd at Point Fermin Park August 3. The antics of guitarist Scott McLean played classic rockabilly drenched in reverb, driven by his rhythm cohorts, Drummer Dirk Vandenberg and Bassist Jim Matkovich, turning the show into a pirates' version of American Bandstand. It was a nice break in the stream of golden oldies sets that were being zealously performed by the other groups during the day.

Though rockabilly is a much older form of rock 'n' roll, it is a more raw music form and a bit more dangerous to perform well. But this band delivered on the promise to an appreciative audience.

Guitarist/lead vocalist Scott "Seatbelt" McLean met drummer Dirk "Flowbee" Vandenberg at Flowbee's place of business, Guitar Safari, on 6th street 15 years ago.

"We just started hanging out. We loved music and guitars. We would get together and jam all night," Seatbelt explained. "Then one day Flowbee asked, 'Do you know any Johnny Burnette? (Burnette was one of the early pioneers of the rockabilly style).'"

Seat Belt continued, explaining, "I knew all of Burnette's songs. We had known each other for years, neither one of us knew we were both fanatics for this stuff. We started playing and oh my god where did this come from?"

From that point they found themselves fully invested in writing and playing in this style of music. It was magic.

"He is genius when it comes to knowing the material," Flowbee explains referring to Seatbelt. "He knows all the words to all these songs, I don't know how you do it," as he turned looking at the guitar player.

Seatbelt just shrugged, "I do forget some verses." Everybody laughed at the unexplained inside joke.

"We had another bass player, Mark Smith (who is on the current CD, who plays an electric bass)," Flowbee related.

"We knew that to play this music, we needed an upright bass. So the 'Kid' came to the rescue and saved the day." The 'Kid' being the upright bassist Jim Matkovich whose obvious skill and knowledge has become a major asset with the group, anchoring the trio as Seatbelt takes off in all directions physically as well as musically.

The Kid, when asked how he liked playing with the group, without hesitation, he stated, "I love playing with these guys. I was looking for a guitarist and a drummer like these two for a really long time. They're real easy to play music with."

The group plans to do some recording in the near future after their gig at the Blue Café on August 16.

During this barn burning set of original and cover material at the Taste in San Pedro, they shifted from one song to the next without missing a beat, playing live, loud, and in your face rockabilly. Then they made a radical left turn during this exciting rockabilly rave up when Seatbelt and the Pecking Order jumped into Alice Cooper's quintessential 70's rock anthem, I'm Eighteen.

In explaining as to why of all the songs the band could have covered they chose Cooper's, Flowbee said, "It was something really off the wall for people that wanted to hear Van Morison's Brown Eyed Girl. "It was a real glam thing. Obviously it worked really well."

To hear their recording, Modern Sounds in Pagan Love Songs, one would never know they were ever into glam or anything other than rockabilly music. From the opening tracks Break Her Down and Shake That Rack to mid album tracks like Stealin' from the Devil and "Cat Fight" to the final track "Timber," this CD collection is nothing but fun! Though it is a rather raw recording, it is pure rockabilly in spirit and tone, demonstrating playful lyricism and monster chops with a felling of unalloyed enthusiasm for genre. From the CD, two singles have been released. The above-mentioned Cat Fight with B-side "Shake that Rack." Also out now as a single is "Rockabilly Stalker" with a non-CD B-side. All of these items are for sale at the shows and on cdbaby.com and iTunes.

Rockabilly Revenge is in its fourth installment, a unique tribute to Rockabilly music produced by Benny Reese and his Hide n' Go Swing Productions and Rebel Kat Entertainment. The Show begins at 4 p.m. Pre-sale tickets are \$12 and \$15

at the door.

The Blue Café is at 210 Promenade, in Downtown Long Beach.

You can contact Seat Belt and the Pecking Order at [www.seatbeltsounds.com](http://www.seatbeltsounds.com)

Guitar Safari ([www.guitarsafari.net](http://www.guitarsafari.net)) is a vintage guitar shop at 424 W. 6th Street in downtown San Pedro. You can save yourself \$3 on a tickets to Rockabilly Revenge 4 there.

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