

Hi Marco, thank you for your time, I wanted to ask you first of all how did you approach the guitar?

Hello and thank you guys! How did I approach the guitar? Well I would say that the first approach was very traumatic. I remember that I was in third grade and that for the hour or the weekly hours of music, you could choose whether to play the usual sweet flute (that all good or bad we learned to play during compulsory school) or take a course in guitar in the school I attended. My mother suggested that I try on the guitar, since I had already used the flute extensively since kindergarten, and I could play it quite well. So I started this course after giving me my very first guitar. A classic guitar of about 100 thousand liras that I still jealously preserve. The lessons, however, were held by this very abrupt and "angry" woman who immediately traumatized me with her "teaching methods" not really patient (if we want to say so), I gave up almost immediately after about 3 months of attendance because she was almost became distressing for me to see that teacher always angry with 8-year-old kids when they could not make a simple barrè. He was able in a short time to make me hate what would later become the musical instrument of my life and my passion. years later, I resumed for my will to play the guitar (this time an electric guitar, it was an imitation of the much more expensive Fender, but always very cheap) accompanied by a 20w always Fender amp. 'era (I was about 13 years) to bring me this time "without constraints" and from total self-taught, to want to learn at all costs those beautiful riffs that I listened and played back in my bedroom day and night. From that moment on I decided to seriously learn this instrument and fantasized about the fact that one day I would have liked to play in front of all those people, as I saw in the videos on TV (at the time some TV channels broadcast videos also metal and rock and not just the "Young Cotechino Style" crap of today ... good times!) and the hundreds of music videos that I kept and that I still keep in my VHS video library.

What were your guitar heroes and then your first plays?

My guitar heroes for excellence were different: first of all Dimebag Darrell (Pantera), Dave Mustaine and Marty Friedman (Megadeth), I really liked metal bands like Sepultura, Fear Factory, Death, Machine Head, Iron Maiden, Motorhead, Rammstein, Type O Negative, Opeth just to name a few, or even more rock like AC/DC, Europe ... I never wanted to close in a "sectorial" way with listening only to a musical vein but let's say I've always been interested a little from everything: from The Doors to Alice In Chains, from Bruno Martino to Michael Jackson for example ... maybe passing through something of a more brutal hair like Nile and Deicide to end with our very Italian Goblin or Extrema. I had my bedroom completely invaded and carpeted by the posters of my favorite bands. You can very well imagine when in the following years, these bands and many others, have become groups of people and friends that I really met and with whom I would share in the future: parties, evenings, stages and real tours: a dream. At the guitar level I liked Dimebag, Malmsteen, Satriani, Paco De Lucia, Al Di Meola, Joe Pass, Steve Morse, Andi Timmons, Michael Romero (Symphony X) and Fredrick Thordendal guitarist of my favorite band: the Meshuggah.

How did you start playing as a 'professional'?

I started by forming a band with a group of neighborhood friends (Flashback). We initially played covers at the oratory of my area, Bicocca district in Milan, and then we started writing our own pieces. I lived practically in the cellar most of my days because I could try and especially raise the volumes as if I were the protagonist of a Motorhead live :) I had even picked up a mattress of who knows who, found in the street, to use as an insulator for the door of the small cellar that I had already filled with containers of eggs (in place of the much more expensive acoustic panels). In the following years things became more and more serious and I started playing in more and more professional groups. Music more and more technical and aggressive but above all with bigger people and with more experience of me. For a while I was part of a band known in the Milanese underground with the name of B.T.H. BlackThorn ... this group also had a contract if I remember correctly and had just recorded a 5-piece EP that would later be included in their first FULL Album. Thus began the first interviews at the Lombard and hinterland radio stations. I really felt in seventh

heaven and proud to be part of such a band. I liked the new songs, I liked them as people, I liked to try together ... in short, I liked everything. I remember a record that was on sale at that time called NOISE OF BOLGIA. The album in question was a sort of compilation of the Milanese underground bands. The Blackthorn also had a piece on this compilation, but it was a very old piece and certainly did not reflect the Technical Trash that we were playing at that time with the new pieces (even the attached picture was from previous members of the group). Ironically, this compilation (NOISE OF BOLGIA) was composed of several groups and boys who would later become my friends musicians and not only ... even colleagues for something much bigger. We would also grow at a worldwide level with a group called Lacuna Coil, which at the time of the compilation was called Sleep Of Right, and they were part of Andrea (voice) and Marco (bass) respectively. We practically attended the same places and especially the pubs themselves! We often went to a pub known at the time with the name of MIDNIGHT PUB. Just in one of these nights at Midnight, Marco (bassist Lacuna Coil) approaches me and says: "Hi Maus, look ... we just recorded our first album (In A Reverie) and we're looking for another guitarist for the group, to be able to perform the pieces of the new live album "(in the band had just arrived" CriZ "Cristiano Mozzati and" Pizza "Cristiano Migliore and had just finished recording their first album with Lacuna Coil ... IN A REVERIE precisely). For a short time I remember they used a very good keyboard player who obviously did not fit (musically speaking) to the sounds of this new album and especially to the intricate guitar arpeggios featured in most of the songs. Actually, I knew very little about the name Lacuna Coil as a band ... I listened to Trash Metal and totally different stuff ... I knew a lot more the people who were part of it because we were always chatting in front of a beer, listening to music together in pubs but nothing more. Indeed, at the time even Cristina worked in this pub and I saw her only as a beer stapler ... I certainly did not imagine that she had such a powerful and powerful voice. My answer to Marco was therefore: "Come on, let's do it, let me have a cassette or a CD with a few pieces to pull me down and try to do a couple of tests to see if you like me and if especially if I can like it to you "(textual words). I learned 5/6 pieces and after a week we started to do a test together at the MoonHouse (which later became our official practice room for quite a few years) ... well, after about half an hour of tests they told me that according to they should not have looked elsewhere and tried other people. Officially they asked me to be part of the group. I immediately had the impression of being comfortable playing with these guys from the first notes made in the rehearsal room. I accepted. They later added that there would be a little European tour there. I then made my first live with Lacuna Coil on the occasion of the showcase of the album IN A REVERIE at a historic ROLLING STONE in Milan totally sold out in January 1999.

Then at a certain point the Lacuna Coil, a big jump with big boxes, what experience was for a column like you, 15 years in the band.

Actually we played together for over 17 years, not 15. We have basically started together. we shared everything, even things that you would not be able to share even with a wife or husband during a lifetime. We have lived the whole evolution of the group ... from the first concerts and small tours in front of a few people, from the car trips with potholes that leave the highway at 5 am ... (I even remember a date in Switzerland in front of 15 people) to the most prestigious stages in the world in front of crowds with more than 100,000 fans. We have come to do what anyone (playing in a band) dreams for a lifetime. A unique, unparalleled experience that I could not describe in a few lines. I will limit myself to saying that it was for all of us (and I think it is also the thought of my former traveling companions) the dream that becomes reality.

Maki & Maus was considered by us coilers the other pillar along with that vocalist Andrea-Cristina, how did the decision to get out of it matured?

The decision to leave the group and formalize it in February 2016 has matured as a result of misunderstandings in terms of composition and communication during the drafting and entry into the studio of the latest album "DELIRIUM". It was a very painful choice on my part, but I could not have done

otherwise. In fact, I had been faced with a crossroads by a person in the band that I have always regarded as a brother. Within the group we have always done things and made decisions all together in democracy, but unfortunately, during this last record, it was not so ... maybe something had already changed even after the departure of the friends and colleagues CriZ and Pizza (people with whom I still remain in contact despite living remotely) and then I decided to end my adventure in the Lacuna Coil.

Now a solo career awaits you with other projects, what's going on in the pot? What can we expect?

Discs? Tour?

After the announcement of my release from the band I received a lot of requests from other foreign groups as a member of the band or more simply for "guest" collaborations on various discs ... I confess that something really interesting was there but that in some cases also declined due to logistical issues. So I started to take another road completely from scratch, decided and motivated about what I wanted to do more in life, that is: keep playing. I really wanted to learn how to play. Not that I was not able to first understand each other, but I wanted to raise the bar to really learn something more. When you play in a totally self-taught band you are surely able to make beautiful songs (see, for example, a group like Nirvana ... I do not think they are ever puzzled about topics such as composition, harmony, melodic or harmonic minor, substitutions, etc. etc. yet they have always sold millions of copies all over the world creating unforgettable songs! And they are certainly not the only example!). I like to say and make the comparison as with the pages of a book ... in the sense that, composition, speaking, and at the level of knowledge, it is as if I had memorized the first 3 pages of a book ... then "the homework" remaining always in your "comfort zone" you do it even with your eyes closed, following a tried and tested formula that works, but never having even flipped through the rest of the pages to see or read the continuation of the story. Well, I decided to read it to the end of this "book" and I'm still doing it. I started studying at a music school (Modern Music Institute) for the knowledge and to take the teaching qualification at the various locations, becoming in a little more than two years an advanced MMI qualified teacher after having done and passed some exams on both theory and practice and on composition. My next "student" goal is to take the "Master in Jazz" (I'm still missing a couple of exams) then we'll see. In the meantime I teach at the MMI office in Milan / Monza. So I had to re-invent myself, trying to create a new job position.

Another project that will see the light in the coming months is the creation of a space that will be called NIPA MUSIC VILLAGE. A real musical village in Monza that will have inside: test rooms, recording studio, relaxation area, auditorium for clinics and some classrooms for teaching, not only for the guitar but also for the other tools (one of these classrooms will be my new teaching seat).

At the same time I can tell you that the thing I miss most in life is playing live ... it's not easy to turn off the light after more than 17 years on the stages of the world since the age of 21. I also think that achieving what has been done with my former group (Lacuna Coil) is something utopian especially for an Italian band, considering the not really happy moment that is going through this kind of music. However, I started writing some songs while waiting to find the right people and musicians to record and above all play them live (so I summarize my next goal instead of "professional"). Beyond the technical ability I have always thought that the combination of professionalism, motivation, and knowing how to look in the same direction is the real strength of a band ... that is why some bands survive in longevity and others disappear after a handful of dates from vivo ... the search for elements with these features is not simple however ... Many people would want everything immediately, others behave like real Rockstars despite not having a shred of experience in the field, without even understanding what really entails a life in tour and the sacrifices that exist even in this type of work when you get to high levels ... You will understand that it is not a simple search so ... I would also like to try to write some soundtrack but that's another story ...

What are your favorite guitars?

I've been an ESP endorser, but I've been a "Schecter Guitars" endorser for several years now. I was lucky and fully available from the parent company in Los Angeles, to be able to create a couple of my Maus Signature models over the years. Models that are currently produced and sold worldwide. The last model created and presented at the NAMM 2016 is called Schecter MAUS M7 (7 strings) ... so inevitably I will have to tell you that it is the best model of the real world?! hahaha ... Joking aside, I'm very happy with the final result. I would have changed a couple of things in hindsight (in fact my guitars, compared to the models on sale, have some changes in both pickups and electronics), but in conclusion, I think it is still coming off a guitar more than valid. Lately, I confess I'm attracted to the STRANDBERG GUITARS (both 7 and 8 strings). They seem really well made guitars and I would be curious to try some models. I also like Suhr (Custom Modern models) and PRS.

Do you use tunings or special techniques?

I would say no ... playing with 7 strings I usually limit myself to the standard BEADGBE tuning or more frequently with the B "dropped" B string. When I happen to play acoustic instead I prefer this type of tuning C # G # C # F # A # C #. At the level of techniques instead ... well ... I see that the Web and YouTube in this case are full of videos with spectacular people ... that makes you want to leave after seeing the first 20 seconds of video to be clear! Stuff to make you detach your jaw from how good they are. Some examples can be: Rick Graham and Guthrie Govan, I follow with great interest the videos that post on the various social networks also Per Nilsson and Tom Quayle (which I consider a true phenomenon and an excellent teacher especially as regards the legato technique!). Lately I've been trying to study and study this kind of technique, but it's not that simple. It would however be limited to mention only these names because there are really a lot of ultra-prepared people and above all lots of perfect strangers who would give the pay to anyone (even big names or guitar heroes if you prefer). In fact, I would not base my judgment on the impeccable technique of execution but also on expressiveness and content! Remember that no matter how good you may be, there will always be a little baby with dirty fingers that turns you like a sock on the other side of the planet ahahah ... lol

In all these years the musical world has changed a lot, both as places to play and as supports and distribution of music, how do you find now the ease of places to play and the liquid music?

Unfortunately, my vision of this call "change" is very negative at the moment. Fortunately, in my city, there are still places for live, we are by genre blues, rock, jazz, metal, etc... Milan has always been a city for live music where the locals are not lacking. Perhaps, what is lacking now is the desire in some cases, the desire for people to leave home to go see a concert. You want a little for the costs to be addressed or also for the location and organization (sometimes not impeccable I mean). I see that the big groups continue and will continue to survive, but that there is little room for the emerging or niche bands. My hope is that you will soon return to something more balanced even for less known groups (and fortunately in that of Milan most of the time it is so) to give the opportunity and above all the right economic compensation even for children. The difficulty for some bands is above all in this, they spend money for equipment, rent vans, eat out, fill up with gas grinding miles and miles even taking leave from work and then what? Maybe even having to pay the manager of a room to play, giving to him and his customers an evening of entertainment. Art is paid point.

As for the distribution of music, well, even there I see it quite gray. There is so much stuff to be able to see or listen for free digitally that you immediately forget things. In my opinion the taste of really listening to a record has been lost. I remember that as a kid, I waited months to be able to buy discs out at a well-known music shop under the subway in downtown Milan. I will certainly say something obvious but the Internet on

the one hand has made us known for a myriad of groups and new things, but on the other has completely destroyed (or almost) the world of discography. Just think about how much they have reduced, for both the American and European markets, the sales standards for a gold record or for a platinum. I think that even the cinema will do the same end, and it will soon become almost like the theater (market niche).

What idea did you make of all these talents we find on television today?

I do not watch television usually. I prefer to play, watch a movie, be with a friend to drink a beer, do some graphic work, play with my dog or do anything else, for example a motorbike ride. However, I know what you mean and I would be a hypocrite if I told you that I never lost at least 1 hour of my life watching a talent. Unfortunately, however, they are not for me. I think they are a great showcase (being on television we would miss something else!) For those who propose, but who leave the time they find for a pure commercial operation. Surely some valid artist will have it also "shaped" but all the rest ends up in oblivion at the end of the program or after an advertisement. pure television business for the great masses.

Do you currently have interesting listening? Is there something you particularly like in the music field?

The albums I listen to, or rather, the bands I listen to are always the ones I grew up with or that I have always listened to, exception made for some news that intrigues me a lot. One out of all the Twelve Foot Ninja. Australian band with really good musicians that I like very much. I can't describe the genre that they do because they range from metal to bossa nova, from jazz piano parts to NuMetal Djent style stuff. Recently then, (perhaps also influenced by the studies I am doing), I bought the INTERVALS records (instrumental band), various Jazz compilations of piano, trumpet or sax so I do not necessarily just stuff for guitarists. Let's just say that except for the "trap" and the "Latin American" I like to vary the ratings, while always remaining the metal, the rock and the jazz my passions.

What role do you think rock has in modern society?

I can't answer your question. In the States and in some foreign countries, fortunately, it is still very present everywhere: in fashion, for example, in cinema, in everyday life. It is very easy to go shopping for example in these big "Walmart" distribution chains and listen in the background of Metal music or something even more "customer friendly" but always with a Rock matrix. I could tell you... We have never been a real rock country, simply because it is not so rooted in our culture, I have always thought of Rock as a lifestyle, as a way of being and thinking. now little radio left, you can keep the flame on and that the interest through the concerts combined with the beauty of seeing a live band never die.

The nickname 'Maus', where does it come from?

Are you really sure you want to know? I'll have to kill you later! MUAHAHAH (Satanic laugh :). Joking aside, anyone who really knows me closely, knows that since I was a child I liked to cripple words or invent new ones, creating my own vocabulary ... most often incomprehensible to people outside my circle of friends. It's like that today too. Some of my colleagues called it "Maus Slang". The definition of the term Maus does not derive from the German language (Maus = topo) or from some coded message to be read during the winter solstice. It was simply a word that I used to say repeatedly in adolescence to describe a pimple. Imagine that we are talking about ages between 13 and 16 years and then, when I met some friends I was spontaneous to say "oh .. did a maus come ?!" ... "look what a fuck...of maus that I came "Etc. ... say it once, say ten, say it a thousand times and in the end I became Maus :)