

Jeff Around Town – November 12th, 2024

Jeff: Now time for another edition of Jeff Around Town. Joining me today, special guest, MarQ Manner, who I want to have him on because he's also a guy who goes around town quite a bit, and we'll tell you about that here in just a second. Good morning, MarQ.

MarQ: Good morning, thanks for having me.

Jeff: Absolutely, thanks for being here. So, I see you, you know, follow you on social media and all that. Of course, MarQ, by the way, a long-time store manager at Homer's, and we'll get into that and vinyl records in just a moment, but I follow you on social media, and it seems like you're always either walking or taking an e-bike somewhere, and drinking coffee and going to old-school diners, so you've got a love for that, or what's the inspiration?

MarQ: Sure. You know, there was a point in my life where I quit everything that was unhealthy in my life, and I ended up having a lot of extra energy, so I started walking and biking and just exploring Omaha, and I've lived here, you know, since I was a teenager, so a long time, but, you know, in those first couple years, I saw more of Omaha than I ever thought was even out there. You know, I got pretty deep into a lot of neighborhoods and different areas, and yeah, I grew a new appreciation for the town that I've lived in for so long, that's for sure.

Jeff: I love that. It's a new perspective. There really is something. I love walking and cycling as well, and there is something about seeing Omaha from that perspective rather than just from your car.

MarQ: Oh, it's very different, yes.

Jeff: What... So you go to coffee shops or diners, and what is it about the diner, for example, that does that for you?

MarQ: I mean, I just like old buildings. I like old places. I like, you know, just things that I think are authentic, you know, and so that's where the diner experience feels right for me.

Jeff: And do you have conversations with people, or are you just kind of off in the corner by yourself hanging out?

MarQ: I do speak with people, absolutely, although there are times when I'm off in the corner by myself too, and sometimes I eavesdrop on you too.

Jeff: So, you're a guy who's been connected into the music scene for a very long time as a supporter and a participant, and you've written for various publications, including The Reader, and you have a blog right now, right?

MarQ: I do. It's omahabuzz.substack.com, where I talk about, I put up a weekly calendar, a very extensive calendar of live music events happening around Omaha, everything from the Omaha Symphony to heavy metal music, so I cover it all.

Jeff: And why do you do that?

MarQ: Well, when The Reader, you know, when The Reader originally shut down, I felt like there was a void, and I like to look at something, you know, physically and find out, and plan out my week, because I go see a couple shows a week at least, you know, and so I felt like that void was there, and I needed to fill that.

Jeff: So you, I mean, so on the music and just getting around, you, you know, it just seems to me you're, you are a guy who's like connected into so many different groups, so to speak, and in different worlds. What's your, like, what's an overall takeaway for you when you think about Omaha from that perspective, or just music and people and?

MarQ: I mean, I've seen so many different generations and different, you know, genres become big, and movements happen in the Omaha music scene, and it's always been a very community-based situation, which I'm sure it is in a lot of places. But, I mean, if I look at my social media, and I can almost connect everybody on there to music in some form or fashion in our area. So, yeah, I think we're all connected through that, or a lot of us are.

Jeff: I mean, you're here now because we do music, but also because we know each other for many years through music, and we find, you know, at KVNO, it's a lot of people who haven't lived elsewhere don't realize that not every major station, not every major city in America has a full-time classical station, and it's a community effort. So, let's talk a little bit about homers and vinyl. What are you seeing in the world of vinyl, and maybe in particular classical music? What are you seeing these days?

MarQ: Well, you know, I mean, we have people come in a lot and say, well, you know, so I see the vinyls back, and, well, vinyl's been back for a long time, but with classical music, there was a time where we were only carrying, you know, the basics and things of that nature, and we've put out more in recent years just because we've had it come in, and, you know, we put it in the racks, and then we started to see that it's moving. It's like, okay, and then I started to watch who's picking up this stuff, and it's a lot of young people, and, yeah, it's very interesting. You know, I think a lot of them are musicians or involved in programs, but they seem to know what they're talking about maybe even more so than me sometimes, and they're looking for very specific things, so, I mean, there's definitely some interest in classical vinyl collecting again.

Jeff: Huh, that's great. That's wonderful, and with younger folks.

MarQ: Younger folks, absolutely. I mean, the older folks come in, and they still buy, they actually buy classical CDs, so, yeah, it's really the younger folk that are driving classical vinyl sales.

Jeff: I love it. Well, MarQ, thanks so much for coming on, Jeff Around Town. Really a pleasure having you come by, so thanks very much, and we'll see you out and about, out and around, and maybe at the next diner.

MarQ: Next diner or coffee shop.

Jeff: Alrighty, thanks much.