

[MUSIC PLAYING]

INTERVIEWER: That's the Twin Cities based band Salsa Del Sol recorded at one of their many outdoor performances around the Twin Cities. If you're at Minnesota now listener, you know we love music. And Salsa Del Sol is a wonderful Twin Cities based band. We love their music. Shai Hayo from Salsa Del Sol is joining us now to talk about the band's music and what's inspiring them lately. Shai, how are you.

SHAI HAYO: Good. How are you this morning? Thanks for having me.

INTERVIEWER: Absolutely. Hey, tell me about the track we just heard.

SHAI HAYO: OK. So that track is a song called Me Libere It's like saying I'm free. I've been freed. It's a typical salsa song from the band called El Gran Combo. A very famous band from Puerto Rico, and we do a version of that song just for its popularity and high energy. We really, really love that song and it's a crowd favorite.

INTERVIEWER: Oh. Tell me by the way about your band. Who are the members? How long have you been together?

SHAI HAYO: We've been together-- Wow. I want to say at this point over 20 years, believe it or not. And it's gone by very quickly. Yeah. We've been performing as a group in all over the Twin Cities and the region around 2001. And it's been quite a journey for us getting to know the community and being able to provide the genres that we perform to a variety of audiences in many different platforms and venues. And it's just been an amazing experience for all of us.

INTERVIEWER: I know you've been pretty busy this summer already.

SHAI HAYO: Correct.

INTERVIEWER: What's been the highlight for you so far?

SHAI HAYO: Oh, my. I would say, so for us, the highlight in general would be any of our outdoor performances where we have just wonderful spontaneous involved community engagement and dancing. Folks out just going crazy dancing to our music and participating. And just providing us with wonderful feedback and smiling faces. It's just wonderful to see Minnesota out there enjoying music and dancing together.

INTERVIEWER: OK. I want to listen to some music that inspires you. So you sent us some songs before the interview. This is the song La Vida Es un carnaval by Celia Cruz.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

I can't sit still as I'm listening to this music. Tell me about Celia Cruz.

SHAI HAYO: OK. So Celia Cruz is known I guess you could say as La Reina de La salsa, which means, the queen of salsa. She is a really super famous or was. She's passed now, but she was just an incredible figure in the Latin American music scene, especially for Cuban music and music of the Spanish speaking Caribbean. This song in particular is a very, very, very famous song that she sang and we play it because it's just so very popular, and it has a great beat and it has a wonderful message. What do you like about this? Just the beat and the message and?

SHAI HAYO: I mean, the song is excellent. And it's just so fun to dance to and to play. It's just a great tune if we had the opportunity to hear the whole thing, and of course, you can come hear us play it any time.

INTERVIEWER: Of course.

SHAI HAYO: But if you click on that link and check it out in the way you can, you'll see that it's a wonderful tune with a message that says, we shouldn't worry about the bad, we should focus on the good. We should focus on the good things that happen in life and because life is a carnival.

INTERVIEWER: I like that.

SHAI HAYO: That's great.

INTERVIEWER: Let's play something else that I know you like.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Tell me about Oscar de Leon.

SHAI HAYO: OK Oscar de Leon is a famous singer and bass player from Venezuela. And he's another artist who's very well known in Latin America. It's very interestingly enough for this song. This is a style of music that comes from the Dominican Republic. And something that's really interesting to me and what I found I find is just wonderful is that he's a Venezuelan artist who helped make popular a song from a completely different country. And this tune really, for me, it shows that spirit of collaboration that happens within Latin America and especially within the Caribbean with regards to representing the different styles that are performed and the popularity that that's expressed in the whole region. This song is just-- it's a wonderful song. It has a great beat. It's really well known and it's another crowd favorite. And that's why we play it.

INTERVIEWER: Shai, when you're up on stage and you're playing music, how do you feel? Because I am just so smitten with this music. I can't sit still when I'm listening to it. How do you feel?

SHAI HAYO: We all love what we do so much. It's inspiring to us for what we do personally interpreting these songs and performing them, and presenting them to an audience. And then at the same point, we really react to the energy that's given back to us by the crowd and we feel that as if we establish this wonderful relationship with the audience. A give and take. And it makes each performance a very unique point in time. A unique moment that we share together.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, I tell you what. Thank you for making my day here, Shai. I appreciate it.

SHAI HAYO: Well, thank you for having me here and bringing some attention to our band and our genre, et cetera, et cetera. And we hope to see you and everyone out there.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, yeah. We're going to be there. Shai Hayo from the band Salsa Del Sol. They've got a number of live dates this summer, including tomorrow night at the Minnetonka City Hall Amphitheater. Thursday night at the Hollywood Hills Recreation Center in Saint Paul. Catch them if you can because they're amazing.