

# BLUEGRASS EUROPE

43/April-May 2005

Official EBMA European Bluegrass Magazine



mit/including  
**BLUEGRASS**  
*Bühne*



# 1 European Bluegrass  
Band 2004: Fragment

Mideando String Quartet – New Acoustic Music with a Big Touch of Bluegrass

The Birth of an Irish Bluegrass Festival

European and International News plus Concert & Festival Calendar

Official Guide to  
EBMA's European World  
of Bluegrass 2005



.....

*The Mideando String Quartet from Italy caught my attention immediately during their performance at EBMA's EWOB in 2002: It was the first band I knew in Europe that actually made a show of their presentation! While proposing a new kind of acoustic music to the ear, they draw from bluegrass roots not only by using acoustic instruments such as mandolin, octave mandolin, cello, guitar, bass guitar but also by combining pop, rock and jazz elements and pure traditional bluegrass music and create a new and unmistakable sound. Their well refined vocal harmonies and texts, which are not only lyrics but by mostly singing in their mother tongue Italian sound like part of the music, are underlined by a cool stage performance: The band seems to actually act what their songs are expressing. Their carefully rehearsed 20 minute performance fully catches even the critical bluegrass audience.*

.....

- Angelika Torrie

.....

In 2003, their show was even more convincing to the festival audience and, in particular, to other participating bands and professional members of EBMA: Mideando was voted #3 European Bluegrass Band 2003 (with #1 Nugget, A, and #2 Monogram, CZ). No doubt, I had to find out more about them!

**An impressive record**  
 Back in 1995 the Padova based band started playing all the important clubs in Veneto, participating in numerous acoustic music showcases in theatres in Triveneto and also in the 1995

and 1996 editions of SUONASTRADA, organized by the City of Padova. In its the last edition, MSQ received the highest number of votes from the audience. In August 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2002 MSQ officially participated in the "Ferrara Buskers' Festival". And MSQ officially participated in the "First European Party of Music" (which took place at the same time in 80 European cities) in Venice on 20 June 1999. The showcase featured more than 4000 bands / musicians from all over Europe. In 2001 their first CD "L'inverno dei coltelli" was played on the radio show "Jetlag" (RAI) by Arturo Stalteri.

Their record of activities continued with appearances in major clubs and venues, radio and TV shows, until their journey brought them to the Netherlands and to EBMA's EWOB in May 2002 for the first time. One of their songs "Lettera d'amore ad una balena" was selected for that year's EWOB compilation CD and thus their place in the European Bluegrass community was settled.

**Q: Who is the Mideando String Quartet?**  
**A:** Mideando's official birth was in January 1994, as an idea of **Stefano Santangelo**, who shares an unrestrainable love for Bluegrass with **Stefano Rampazzo** (MSQ's former and first guitarist); the two of them involved **Riccardo Targhetta** almost since the beginning and, in May 1995, **Piero Lorenzetto**. With this lineup, we started to play bluegrass music and some covers in "bluegrass-style". Our love

for music and our huge curiosity to explore new ways of interpreting music and play with acoustic instruments and our voices led us to new realms of acoustic music. And, after five years of never-ending shows in nightclubs and pubs, we recorded our first CD "L'inverno dei coltelli", which was released in autumn 2000. It contains 100% original songs and is the result of the in-depth musical research over five years combining the sound of our acoustic instruments and Italian lyrics written by Mr. Giulio Mozzi (book writer for Mondadori-Einaudi). Soon after its release, Stefano Rampazzo left the band and **Fabiano Guidi Colombi** joined us. He added tons of energy and new ideas to the creativity of MSQ. And we all know what became of this... During our shows we played numerous covers of more or less known songs, fully rearranged. On growing request, we recorded some of these songs during our 2001 tour to make them available on our live CD "BOOTLEG!".

**Q: Where do you musically come from?**  
**A:** It's actually quite peculiar, the four of us come from quite different experiences: Stefano from bluegrass and jazz; Riccardo, Piero and Fabiano, though in different ways, come from rock music: heavy rock as for Riccardo, more classical for Piero and distinctly progressive and 70's style for Fabiano. The four of us together had to be a blast!!! From the very beginning, our goal was, to propose something different, original, well played and presented professionally to the audience.

**Q:** How do you select and arrange your songs?

**A:** There are different approaches to original songs and covers. In the first case, one of us comes with an idea, a melody. It is discussed and bound to be rearranged by the entire band. In the second case... well... we always have funny and long internal negotiations before we agree on the "right" interpretation! And finally, we only choose the songs all members like best.

**Q:** Let's talk about EBMA's EWOB: How did you get here?

**A:** Stefano was aware of this important meeting for a while, and for 2002 he sent a demo and the EWOB committee actually asked us to participate... we were so thrilled – and worried at the same time: After all, our music is not quite 100 % bluegrass. However, after the first two minutes on stage in Voorthuizen, everything was different! We realized that bluegrass people like our music. And now we think that cultured people like bluegrass audiences are happy if a band tries to explore new ways, maintaining at the same time a strong link with their bluegrass

"...Third place winners, the Mideando String Quartet (Italy), introduced themselves by saying they were not a bluegrass band! And truly, their rock, blues and progressive jazz influences were far more in evidence, right down to muscle-bound singer and percussionist Riccardo Targhetta, sporting a black mesh t-shirt and moves worthy of any pop group. In fact, all four sing (Stefano Santangelo - mandolin, Fabiano Guidi Colombi - guitar, Piero Lorenzetto - electric bass), and the band features powerful, grandiose vocal harmony arrangements in its eclectic mix of original and cover tunes. But any doubts from bluegrass quarters were quickly laid to rest when Mideando ended a rock number by tearing into a raging high-speed bluegrass mandolin solo. ..."  
International Bluegrass, IBMA, 2003



origin. And that is exactly what we like to do. But unfortunately music is not the easiest way to survive, therefore all of us are employed in different companies to make a living. No doubt, this steals our time to make music but you cannot skip it.

**Q:** Where can we see Mideando in 2005?

**A:** From 30 April to 8 May 2005 Mideando will be once again on their annual "European Tour". The band will participate once again at EBMA's EWOB Festival. They are the only band that basically declares itself as "non bluegrass" to perform over four consecutive years at the festival and so far the only band presenting original songs with Italian lyrics. Mideando will also play at the Rabobank Music Festival.

**The journey continues...**

The new CD "Viaggio..." (Journey), produced by Velut Luna and released in June 2004, keeps the

direction of the bands development and features ten new original songs and two cover versions arranged along this unmistakable Mideando sound. The CD can be bought online ([www.ludomentis.com](http://www.ludomentis.com)).

People throughout the music scene, but in particular bluegrassers, love this new album. It is as special in its presentation as the bands performance is on stage. In fact, if you've seen them live before, you can close your eyes and see them perform again in your "head cinema"....

Mideando certainly opens doors for the younger generation: One website entry reads: "...The day we received the CD "Viaggio ..", the girls invited their friends over to listen to it and they made up a dance to one of the tunes."

**Mideando String Quartet**

via P. Vergerio, 6  
35100 Padova, Italy  
phone +39 049 8021556  
mobile +39 338 8227001  
msq@despammed.com  
santangelo.s@virgilio.it  
[www.mideando.it](http://www.mideando.it)