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Ancestral Connection Inspires deSol



November 02, 2005

Katie Hasty

"My mother's in the kitchen cookin' up a pot of rice and beans/...Then her favorite song would come on the radio/Soon she'd start dancing/The way the ladies do in the old country."

Queens by-way-of-New Jersey native Albie Monterrosa takes a lot of cues from his childhood to round out the sound of his band, deSol. Monterrosa's lyrics aren't the only elements to be touched by his Latino roots (his parents are immigrants from El Salvador): at its core, deSol is a rock band striving to connect with, and connect others, to its collective Latin ancestry.

"Our deepest hope is to crossover to the Latino market. Most of us are Latin-Americans. We want people to relate to us in that way."

- deSol's Albie Monterrosa

• Official Web site deSolMusic.com

"Diversity our spirit. We're just tapping into the spirit," Monterrosa says of his seven-piece band.

"We just want our ancestors come out of the music."

The inspiration for the band didn't come directly from his upbringing, however. Monterrosa grew up listening to 1970s rock and pop radio and began writing songs in that vein on his own.

Reaching a dead end, he mused forming a Latin-based rock band only after vacationing in the Carribean, jamming on his guitar to the sounds of Spanish rhythms pounded out on a conga drum.

"It was like an awakening, like I really need to wake up and get back to my roots. They were sitting right there," he says.

Arriving home, he collected a number of like-minded musicians and, together, they created their self-released, self-titled

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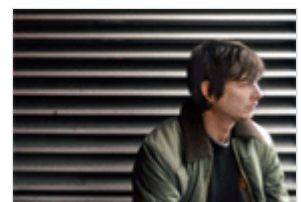
Pearl Jam's 'New' World Order

Eddie Vedder chuckles when he looks back on the early years of Pearl Jam's lifecycle and how the group balanced the pressures of success: "You get growing pains when you get taller, but we got them when we were trying to shrink." [More...](#)



Q&A: Rascal Flatts

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Wilco's Kotche Keeps The Beat On 'Mobile'

Wilco drummer Glenn Kotche steps outside of a rock band context on his new Nonesuch solo album, "Mobile." As he writes in the liner notes, the

debut. Using lessons learned from the Santana school of rock, deSol's classic rock inbreeding incorporates solos and breakdowns, with loads of Latin percussion and a few licks of Spanish in with their dominantly English lyrics.

Curb records re-released "deSol" in July, cleaning up the band's organic sound with pop production and fiery Latin flair heard in the repertoire of many current Latin stars. The set reached No. 8 on Billboard's New Artist Albums (Northeast) chart.

Single "Karma" explores a do-unto-others theme over a palatable, adult-oriented smooth groove. "Blanco Y Negro" (white and black) discourages listeners from stuffing people into simple categories. Monterrosa sings: "If blanco y negro's what you like/Man, you don't know what you've been missing all your life."

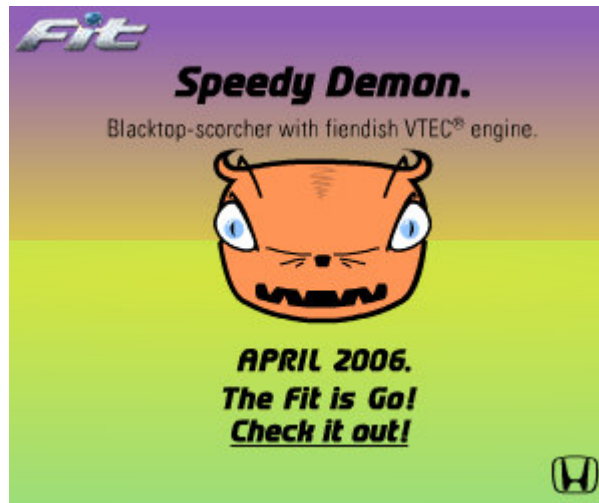
"Our deepest hope is to crossover to the Latino market. Naturally, we're all Americans. Most of us [in the band] are Latin-Americans. We want people to relate to us in that way," he says.

Monterrosa describes deSol's live show as its bread and butter, however. The band's spirited performances encourage audience participation, its dance-ready cadences loud and vocal harmonies persistent. The group has widely toured the United States, playing the Austin (Texas) City Limits Festival and Lollapalooza, opening for the likes of Los Lonely Boys, Widespread Panic and Ozomatli.

deSol will polish off its touring year with an early December swing through Texas with Del Castillo and ring in the New Year at the legendary Stone Pony in Asbury Park, N.J. (See the band's official Web site deSolMusic.com for details.)

For their next album effort, Monterrosa says they're going to try to "dive deeper" into Latin styles. But, with his background in pop songwriting, it may be a challenge.

"Yeah, I've tried writing a *samba* song," he laughs, "but it always turns into something else."



eight-track project investigates "the idea of negative or opposite rhythms by utilizing the intrinsic spaces -- or rests -- of rhythms."

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