

The Hippo



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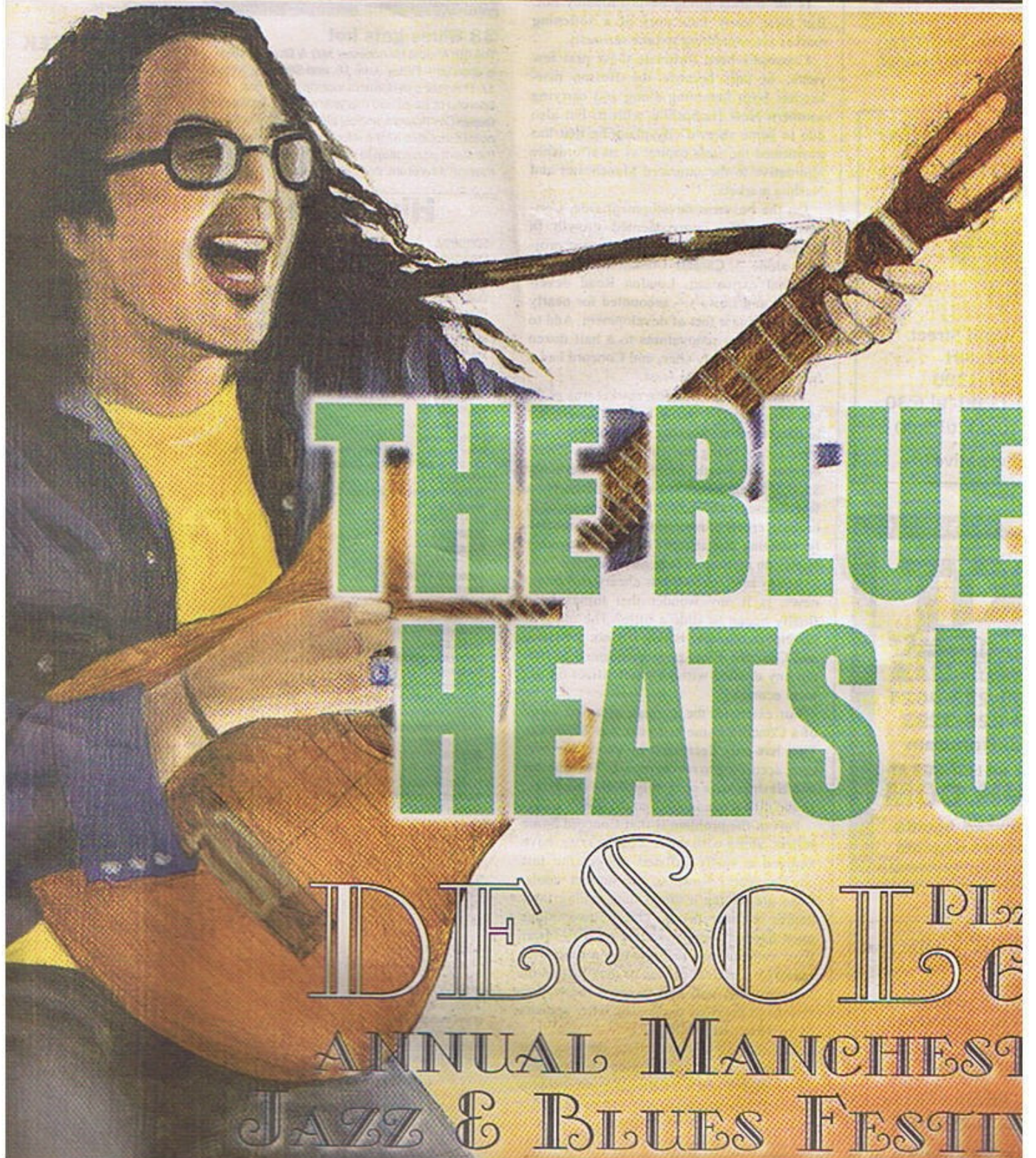
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LOCAL NEWS, FOOD, ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT



THE BLUE HEATS U

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ANNUAL MANCHEST
JAZZ & BLUES FESTIV

Meet the music

Jazz & Blues performers speak



deSol

deSol is rock with Latin flavor. It's the result of a Salvadoran man jamming with a Hungarian, a Mexican/Irishman, a couple of Germans a Peruvian and a Puerto Rican. deSol is the result of Albie Monterrosa, a Hollis, Queens native obsessed with music and obsessed with merging his Latin background with his rock 'n' roll influences. Even when he's on vacation, Monterrosa is never far from his guitar and a laptop to record on. The band has seen recent success and its music is regularly played on 92.5 The River (WXRV). Listen for the songs "Karma" and

"Blanco y Negro" from their self-titled debut studio album. Albie Monterrosa of deSol talked to us about his Latin soul and how, as a kid, he attacked Run DMC.

See them live: deSol performs Saturday, June 17, from 8:30 to 10 p.m.

You guys have been around for a while and this is your first studio album?

Yeah. We did a demo in 2001, and some of those tracks off that went on the new release.

How many of you are in this eclectic band?

There are seven of us. We still do the van and SUV thing. We have a 15-passenger van and a big SUV and a trailer. We looked into getting a tour bus but it's very expensive ... with gas too. Bio-diesel would be great, but even with that you still need a bus driver. It's just easier this way.

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You talk about how you want to fill your music with Latin soul. So what is Latin soul?

The Latino thing is mostly about drumming and getting close to Mother Earth and the language. When I started deSol, and started going back to my roots, is when the doors started opening for me as a musician. The spirit is about embracing the world. It's like, when people came over my house when I was a kid my mom would always cook them food. There was always a sense of family and that's what we have here.

Who in rock 'n' roll has inspired you?

I was a piano player since I was seven, so I love Elton [John]. He's my god. And there's Billy Joel. I just had dreams of being on stage playing a piano with the big spotlight. I loved John Lennon, how he gathered people, and I loved [Bob] Marley in my teenage years.

Did you intentionally gather a diverse group of musicians when you formed the band?

I just prayed so hard for the right people and it just happened. I wanted a brotherhood. I didn't just want hired guys. I wanted a feeling of family and camaraderie.

Growing up in Hollis, Queens, did you ever run into Run DMC?

Absolutely. I used to work at Hillside Deli and they would hang out outside of the deli. That's when they were just starting to blow up. They'd smoke their Kools and buy their 40s of Colts. One day, probably when I was about 14 and it was winter ... we were walking around our neighborhood to get our weed from the corner and our beers, and we saw Run DMC getting out of their limos. We belted them with snowballs and rain.

Really?

I swear to God.

If you got in a brawl with Los Lonely Boys, who would win? Keep in mind that the winner of that fight would go on to fight the champions, Los Lobos.

We would.

Why?

There are three of them and there are seven of us. And we'd take Los Lobos too.

No way. You didn't just say that.

Yes. How many of them are there anyways? [Note: there are five of them.] And we've got Ray (Turull). He's straight from Harlem. He looks like a bouncer. I'm the weakest one. I'd probably just stand back and watch.