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**Live!**

Who: deSol When: 8:30 p.m. Wednesday Where: State Theatre, Falls Church

Thursday, November 10, 2005; Page VA32

When local alternative rock station WHFS (99.1 FM) shifted to the Spanish-language format WLZL "El Zol" earlier this year, the station could have made the transition somewhat less shocking if it had used a few songs by deSol to announce the change.

This seven-man band from Asbury Park, N.J., seamlessly blends Latin rhythms, fluid electric guitar and the vocal stylings of a charismatic frontman in a manner that appeals to fans of English- and Spanish-language radio formats. Add this septet to a growing list of artists -- Los Lobos, Los Lonely Boys, Ozomatli and, of course, godfather Carlos Santana -- who make Latin soul a universal pleasure.

In an interview, lead singer Albie Monterrosa talked about the band's musical mix. "We kick it like an old-school rock group, like the Stones or like Zeppelin," he said. Yet he also acknowledged the pull of his heritage. "These peasant rhythms are as old as the hills. I believe they open the heart, they open the soul, they're connected deep within our DNA."

"I was raised on both sides of the fence," he explained, citing Jackson Browne, Elton John, Ruben Blades and the Fania All Stars among the artists whose music he followed as a child. On deSol's self-titled debut CD, released in July on Curb Records, the group happily refuses to acknowledge musical boundaries, employing English and Spanish lyrics, exotic polyrhythms, funky bass beats and fiery guitar licks that would do Santana proud. In fact, the band's set-closing take on "Oye Como Va" rocked the 2005 Lollapalooza Festival.

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New Jersey-based band deSol performs Wednesday at the State Theatre in Falls Church. (By Danny Sanchez)

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"It's been a great year for us," Monterrosa said, citing an opening gig for R.E.M. in Mexico City last December as a standout event.

"Getting to hang with those guys and having them watch our set . . . you're in the game now."

DeSol also appeared at the Austin City Limits Music Festival, and opened shows for Los Lonely Boys, Widespread Panic, and the Wailers, among others, touring virtually nonstop since the CD's release. "We've been chasing radio," playing wherever willing stations have spun the band's tunes, Monterrosa said. "We crisscrossed the country three or four times this past year. That's where we live, on the stage." The current tour will extend into early December with a 10-date stomp through Texas, where deSol will no doubt get crowds in the holiday mood with the band's tender, bilingual take on "Little Drummer Boy," which was released recently as a holiday gift to fans.

For those who can't wait until next week to rock out, one of Austin's favorite singer/songwriters, Bob Schneider, will perform at the State tonight. Though Schneider's sound often gets labeled American rock or roots rock, he's unwilling to stick to any single format. A bit of a musical prankster, he's led a funk-and-rap group (Joe Rockhead), played with a jam band (the Ugly Americans) that opened for the Dave Matthews Band and fronted the Scabs, a dance band occasionally as uncomfortable as its name would indicate.

Schneider has released three solo albums, the second of which, "Lonelyland," received more attention because of Schneider's disheveled good looks and previous girlfriend (Sandra Bullock) than for its eclectic music.

His latest CD, "I'm Good Now," came out in April 2004.

## -- MARIANNE MEYER

*The State Theatre is at 220 N. Washington St. Doors open at 7 p.m. and a dinner menu is available. Tickets are \$10 for deSol, \$18 for Schneider and are available through Ticketmaster or at the theater from noon and 5 p.m. weekdays and noon to 11:30 p.m. on show days. The phone number is 703-237-0300 and the Web site, where you can find directions, seating and admission policy, is <http://www.thestatetheatre.com>. Share the love. Send a Live! suggestion to [mariannemeyer@comcast.net](mailto:mariannemeyer@comcast.net).*

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