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Show offers fans chance to get rowdy

■ Six-piece ensemble The Motet wants its audience to let it all out on the dance floor

By Lisa Toth
Oregon Daily Emerald

Dave Watts dares Eugene music lovers to have the time of their lives, even if they've never felt this way before.

Watt, founder of the six-piece ensemble The Motet, said he and his bandmates dig reactions from the crowd, and they're all about having fun. The Motet's concert Friday night at WOW Hall is a chance for fans to be as rowdy as possible. The more energy they have, the better.

"We're not the kind of group that thrives off our own music — we thrive off the audience," Watts said.

The Motet show promises traditional Afro-Cuban jazz funk and Brazilian grooves, plus the opportunity for the audience members to express themselves and let it all out on the dance floor. Watts said he hopes the audience is pumped up for the show because the band will be recording live tracks to put on their upcoming live CD release.

The concert, which begins at 8:30 p.m. at WOW Hall, located at 291 W. 8th Ave., and is open to people of all ages. Doors open at 8 p.m. Reed Davaz, box office manager and WOW Hall volunteer, said the venue has 400 tickets available for the concert, half of which are on sale in advance.



Courtesy

Davaz said she's heard The Motet before and enjoys its diversity and unique range of sounds. They sing in at least five different languages, and Watts said some of their music includes Nigerian traditional lyrics praising African deities. This ethnic addition to their music comes from their two trips to Cuba and six months that lead vocalist Jans Ingber spent traveling and studying music in Africa.

Davaz also said the opening Latin dance band, Son Melao, will add their salsa style to start off the night.

"There are not too many opportunities to hear Latin music in concert — especially for the under 21 crowd," said Davaz, a University senior studying Spanish.

Son Melao features a variety of musicians on instruments ranging from the bongos, congas and timbales to the saxophone, trumpet and flute.

Bob Fennessy, publicist for WOW Hall, said The Motet performed with Son Melao at the hall in the fall, and has a large local following.

"They're a jam band that's different from most bands that fall into that

category," Fennessy said.

The group consists of Watts (drum kit), Scott Messersmith (percussion), Ingber (lead vocals, percussion), Mike Tiernan (guitar), Greg Raymond (organ, Fender Rhodes, piano) and newcomer Paul McDaniel (bass).

One of the songs Watts said they'll be performing Friday night is called "War is coming," and was written by the band War in the 1970s. But Watts said the lyrics address regarding Vietnam are still pertinent to today's international relations.

Eugene is Ingber's hometown, and his local roots will draw the local crowd. The Eugene native spent his high school days playing in two bands, The Boogie Patrol Express and The Benjamins. Ingber also still has a West African drum and dance base of friends and family in town.

Ingber's father, Howard, lives in Eugene, and aside from being a pro-active fan who has been publicizing their performance, he'll host the group at his home while they are here.

Watts started The Motet on Halloween 1998, in Boulder, Colo.

And when they tour, Watts said the band faces the "same challenges as being married."

"We're like a family," he said. "We wake up together and go to sleep together."

They have been on the road for one week of their three-week tour, hitting Whitefish, Mont., Idaho and then Seattle.

"We were in Whitefish tearing it up snowboarding in the mountains and singing at night," Watts said. "It doesn't get much better than that."

After a stop in Eugene, they'll head to California. Watts said because they know each other so well it has improved the quality of the music they are able to produce.

"We're not like *NSYNC," he said. "We don't each have our own tourbus."

Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. Tickets are available at CD World, Face the Music, House of Records, Taco Loco, WOW Hall and the EMU Ticket Office.

E-mail reporter Lisa Toth at lisatoth@dailymerald.com

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PFC

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the past for MSA and the Jewish Student Union, suggesting the criteria PFC uses to distinguish between "religious" and "cultural" may be as blurry as the two intertwining meanings of the words.

The group decides which events are religious on a case-by-case basis, PFC chairwoman Mary Elizabeth Madden said.

"There are no set guidelines," she said. "We use common sense. If there were certain events that clearly screamed 'religious,' we wouldn't fund those."

Yet student groups' varying interpretations of "religious events" implies the definition isn't cut and dried.

In MSA's Feb. 4 PFC hearing, PFC member Erin Pursell asked MSA whether Ramadan and Eid Al-Adha could be considered religious holidays, according to minutes from that night's meeting.

An MSA member said the holidays were analogous to Christmas and Easter.

ASUO Student Senate President Peter Watts, who was at the hearing, said this statement should have set off an alarm that the event was religious.

"Even though Hanukkah and the Jewish culture are intrinsically tied, it is also a religious event. The same can be said for Christmas," he said. "Christmas and Easter are clearly religious holidays."

But PFC unanimously voted to fund the celebrations, despite conversations implying the events could be considered religious.

When asked what, in particular, went on in the MSA meeting, Madden admitted after spending more than 100 hours in the PFC meetings, she couldn't remember the details. Madden said she found out the tape recorder was broken after the Feb. 4 meeting, so tapes from that night are blank.

Madden said she remembered a language barrier between PFC and MSA members, and she relied on PFC member Nadia Hasan, who is Muslim, to explain the holiday.

According to the minutes, Hasan described the holiday as "an opportunity for everyone to understand the Islamic culture."

MSA co-director Mahmoud Abdul-Jawad said the three-day holiday takes place during the Islamic pilgrimage season. He said that MSA's event is cultural because it is a celebration that incorporates no specific rituals or religious ceremonies.

"It wouldn't be considered religious because there isn't worshipping," he said.

He added that because PFC did not define for him "religious," he "can't give an exact answer on that" question.

This isn't the first year MSA's religious affiliation was brought up. Madden said there's been little debate in recent years, but members of the ASUO Executive in 1986 questioned using incidental fees to fund a groups that seemed unavoidably tied to religion, according to ASUO memos from January 1986. In the Jewish Student Union's 2001 hearing, questions also arose regarding the religious implications of JSU's program statement.

When University President Dave

Frohnmayr's office reviewed the program's mission and goals statement, he wanted to alter the statement to represent the group's cultural, rather than religious, principles. Executive Assistant President Dave Hubin said. The president's office asked then-ASUO President Jay Breslow to discuss the situation with the group. The group agreed to the changes, Hubin said.

JSU co-director David Kent said that although the name "Jewish Student Union" implies the group is a religious organization, JSU focuses on the culture. "Jews have created around their religion."

"Since Jews have been separated out from Christians and Muslims, we've created our own culture, dance and song that may not necessarily have to do with prayer," he said.

He used the religious holiday "Pasach" as an example of an event JSU considers cultural.

"In Israel today, you can be a very secular Jew," he said. "You still might eat the traditional foods, and gather with your family," he said.

But the cultural sides of Pasach can be celebrated without recognizing the religious origins of the celebration, he said.

David Jaimes, MEChA's co-director, made a similar comment about the Catholic holiday Dia de los Muertos — a celebration of the after-death spirit.

"Mexico is primarily Catholic, but in Mexico we don't incorporate that," he said. "We focus on the cultural rather than the religious aspects."

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