

Playing On the Wind

The Motet elevates funk to lofty new heights.



Blending equal parts funk, jazz, rock, techno and world-beat rhythms into what's been dubbed "Electric Americubafrikan Groove," the band really defies categorization. On the other hand, calling The Motet's music "eclectic" is like calling Rage Against the Machine "spirited" — it's a woefully inadequate description. The only two things you can expect from this band are consistent-

ly great music and constant variation.

From its inception in 1998, The Motet has been in a state of perpetual evolution. Drummer and visionary Dave Watts has been a prevailing force in this process, and has served as the band's anchor through some major changes in the lineup, including the departure of lead singer Jans Ingber. Watts' tireless imagination has spawned all of the band's new material. Scott Messersmith, the other remaining original member, is a brilliantly dexterous percussionist who complements Watts' flawless

beats, reinforcing the rhythmic roots that form The Motet's foundation. Rounding out the current lineup are four of Boulder's finest: Garret Sayers on bass, Dominic Lalli on sax, Adam Revell on keys and Ryan Jalbert on guitar. In addition, The Motet has always been a revolving door to top-notch guest musicians, so you never know who'll make an appearance. Expect spontaneous, all-band percussion solos and a set list that spans the globe. As always with The Motet, come ready to dance, 'cause this ain't no sit-down band. **EW**

Tuscon via France

Parisian Naim Amor fashions avant-French pop.

In 1997, Naim Amor transplanted himself from Paris to Tucson. Why? In 1995 he met someone from Tucson who was making a documentary about the Tucson band Giant Sand, and he came for a visit. Amor befriended Joey Burns in his pre-Calexico days and recorded some songs with him. "I came back the next year just because I enjoyed it the first time," Amor said in a phone interview. That time, fellow Frenchie Thomas Belhom came along, and "we decided to experience playing music in a totally different context," said Amor. "It's to experience something different, moving out of Paris. It's like an adventure."

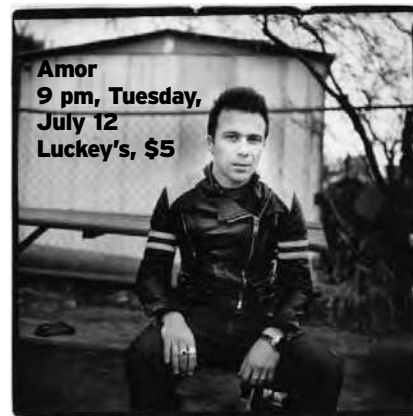
France's loss is our gain, as Amor makes off-kilter pop sung mostly in French and containing bits of fuzzed-out guitar, strings, vibes, accordion, trumpets and electronic loops and samples.

Along with Belhom, Amor formed avant-garde pop project Amor Belhom Duo in 1997. With Belhom's recent return to France, the band is on extended hiatus and Amor is now solo, calling his band simply Amor. His adventure is taking him to New York, where he spends time to have more of a big city experience, like Paris. But despite his desire to be in New York for months at a time, Tucson is where he always returns. "Being in Tucson is absolutely wonderful because you have a lot more space and time to do lots of things you cannot do in a very big city," said Amor. "It's very special in Tucson, very laid back."

Amor says he has an "American brain," so his music is not as breathy and overtly sexual as much French pop of the past. It's music with a lounge touch and summer coolness. Listen while glugging Budweiser, not fine French Syrah.

But Amor doesn't try to play music like an American either. "I live in Tucson and there's a lot of country music here and I really don't try to play that. I'm not trying to play any way. There's a tradition of French pop music that takes its roots from lots of genre of music so I try to stay in that tradition," he says.

Amor plays with style, using toys and metal objects on his guitar strings and making ample use of the obstacle course of pedals and effects arrayed in front of him. He also plays an accordionesque melodica. Amor is joined onstage by baritone guitarist Mike Bagesse, drummer Dimitri Manos and bassist Ryan Eggleston. — *Vanessa Salvia*



Colorado powerhouse The Motet will once again grace the WOW Hall on July 12 with a night of airtight, infectiously funky arrangements. Innovative in both music and environmental activism, The Motet claims the distinction of being the first band in history to power every show with 100 percent sustainable wind energy. This, along with a refreshingly focused take on the often-rambling jam-band genre, could explain why The Motet has enjoyed such an overwhelmingly positive reception both in their hometown of Boulder, Colo., and here in Eugene. A staple at the WOW Hall, the band's show on Tuesday will follow on the heels of a Sunday appearance at the Oregon Country Fair.

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