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Aspen Daily News

Grupo Fantasma to hit the TACAW stage tonight

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Brenon Reed, Special to the Aspen Daily News

An Austin-based fusion band with a multicultural flair will take the stage today at The Arts Campus at Willits.

Grupo Fantasma will bring its upbeat music of traditional mariachi and orchestra with psychedelic punk and R&B soul to create a unique blend of sounds, tying the past and the present into catchy and energetic tunes. The drums, bass and guitar bring out the modern "funk" while the horns, such as trumpet and trombone, deliver an ode to the group's mariachi influence. The performance is scheduled to begin at 8 p.m.

Also known as TACAW, the venue is located at 400 Robinson St. in Basalt. The concert is open to those 18 and older, with tickets selling for \$25.

Grupo Fantasma has been playing for over two decades, winning a Grammy in 2011 after receiving two nominations. Grupo has worked with countless other artists, such as GZA from the Wu-Tang Clan, where the group performed live with the rapper during a music festival in Tennessee. Other collaborations include playing with the late Prince, who had Grupo as an "on-call backup band" flying out to Las Vegas every Thursday to jam with the Purple Majesty years before his passing in 2016.

The band consists of nine performers:



Austin-based Grupo Fantasma brings its high-energy sounds and multicultural flair to the stage Friday at The Arts Campus at Willits.

Courtesy photo

Jose Galeano (timbales, vocals), Kino Esparza (vocals, hand percussion), Beto Martinez (guitar), Greg Gonzalez (bass), John Speice (drums), Matthew "Sweet Lou" Holmes (congas), Gilbert Elorreaga (trumpet), Josh Levy (baritone saxophone) and Mark "Speedy" Gonzales (trombone).

Grupo Fantasma offers more than their mariachi-style music. Brownout is an alter ego for the group, described as Grupo Fantasma's "psychedelic Latin funk little brother." In 2014, the group released a project titled "Brownout Presents Black Sabbath," an album inspired by the 1970s British rock band Black Sabbath.

Brownout takes the catchy and iconic Black Sabbath guitar riffs and bass lines

but adds horns and other distinctive Grupos Fantasma instruments. The group skillfully combines the elements of Latin psychedelic music with the heavy metal sound and lyrics inspired by Black Sabbath, resulting in an exceptional fusion. The combination of metal and Latin-inspired music creates a distinct sound that accentuates the outstanding attributes of both genres.

On Saturday, TACAW will follow up with a Salsa Night for guests 21 and over. Admission is \$20, and the doors open at 7:30 p.m., while lessons start at 8 p.m. and social events continue at 9 p.m.

Next week, on July 8, TACAW will

play host to another bilingual musical group, Jenny and The Mexicats. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show starts at 8 p.m. The event is open to those 18 and older, and tickets are \$25 if purchased in advance and \$35 on the day of the concert.

“Part of our mission is to serve the entire valley and everybody there,” said Kendall Smith, director of programs at TACAW.

Later in the summer, on Aug. 12, TACAW will host an all-ages BASALSA event that starts at noon and goes into the night. This dance is free and open to everyone.

For more information visit tacaw.org.