

# TELLURIDE DAILY PLANET

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## JAZZ FEST

### THE LATIN BLENDS OF NOSOTROS

*Band plays Friday at  
the Moon, Saturday  
in Town Park*

By ELENA KELTNER  
Daily Planet Contributor

**E**ighteen jazz groups will play the Telluride Jazz Festival this weekend, filling the mountain air with the sound of saxophones, trumpets, trombones, keyboards and more. One band, though, brings a Latin kick that will temporarily transport audiences out of the mountains and into the heart of New Mexico.

Nosotros, an acclaimed band out of the Albuquerque/Santa Fe area, plays a Jazz After Dark set at Fly Me to the Moon Saloon on Friday 10 p.m., and takes the main stage Saturday at 2:30 p.m.

Nosotros began as a guitar trio in 1994 in Las Cruces, N.M. Today, only one member of the original group remains: Randy Sanchez, now playing the Cuban Tres (guitar-like instrument) and singing vocals. In addition to Sanchez, Nosotros' current lineup includes: Carlos Fontana on percussion and lead vocals, Shane Derk on guitar, Felipe Ruibal on guitar, Nael Ramirez on sax, vocals, and percussion, Russell Scharf on trumpet and percussion, Gil Uribe on bass, and Dennis Jasso on drums, vocals and percussion.

Jasso said the group came together naturally.

"The scene there in Las Cruces is kind of small so we all sort of knew each other," he said.

Although Nosotros will be playing at the Jazz Festival, the band's range is much more than jazz. Nosotros borrows from the colorful elements of Latin, flamenco, salsa and rock. The variety of influences derived from



Victor Wooten Band [Courtesy image by Steven Parke]

## JAZZ FEST

### Born into the bass

*Victor Wooten plays main stage, free educational show  
at the library during Jazz*

By KATIE KLINGSPORN  
Editor

**B**y the time Victor Wooten was born, there was already a space reserved for him in a band.

His four older brothers needed a bass player, after all, and what better candidate than the fifth Wooten? So when he was just a toddler, his brothers began teaching him to play the bass. The effect, Wooten says, is that he learned to play the instrument in the way most humans learn to speak their first language — naturally, innately, without forced effort or too much thought.

"You don't even think about whether you love it or not, you learn without even knowing it," Wooten said. "I was learning the same way, communicating in

the same language with my older brothers."

The early inculcation, combined with raw talent, a no-holds-barred experimental approach and years of playing yielded one of the best bass players the world has known. Wooten is a five-time Grammy winner and member of the super-group Bela Fleck and the Flecktones who has been showered with just about every bass-related accolade there is. He was voted Bassist of the Year in *Bass Player Magazine* three times, appeared on the cover of the magazine numerous times and named the top bassist of all time by *Rolling Stone* in 2011. And on top of his musical accomplishments, he is an avid teacher, published author, magician, father and husband.

Wooten, who has played his

### Victor Wooten

Victor Wooten will appear at a free educational show aimed at kids Saturday at 12 p.m. at the Wilkinson Public Library. He will follow that up with a Jazz Fest headlining slot Saturday night on the Town Park stage.

fair share of Telluride Bluegrass Festivals, is coming to Telluride this weekend for his first appearance ever at the Telluride Jazz Festival.

He will headline the main stage with his band in Town Park on Saturday at 7:30 p.m., and will also play a free educational performance Saturday at 12 p.m. at the Wilkinson Public Library.

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Nosotros [Courtesy image]

# The Latin blends of Nosotros

**NOSOTROS**, from page 44

the band members makes it possible to blend all these inclinations.

"Everybody in the band comes from such a different background ... there's a little bit of everything in there," Jasso said. "A lot of guys were raised on heavy metal ... some guys were raised on jazz ... what results is just kind of this mix of genres."

Also making the Nosotros band members unique are their diverse musical skills. Although Uribe plays bass for the band, he also plays guitar, keyboard and percussion. He DJs as well. Derk,

who plays guitar for the band, plays piano as well.

This combination of skill and diversity has brought Nosotros success.

In 2002, the band caught the ear of Chris Trujillo, who produced their award-winning third album, "Nosotros."

While the band is appreciative of awards, commercial acclaim is not their primary focus. "We try not to put too much emphasis on it," says Jasso.

So, what does Nosotros emphasize? It's about the camaraderie of the bandmates,

according to Jasso. "That's the great thing about being in a band like Nosotros ... it's definitely an extension of our own family," said Jasso.

Perhaps that is why the name of the band is "Nosotros," Spanish for "we."

Come listen to a show in the mountains that will take you away to New Mexico and leave you with tunes of jazz, latin and much more in your head. For information about the Jazz Festival and this exciting and innovative band, visit [telluridejazz.org](http://telluridejazz.org).