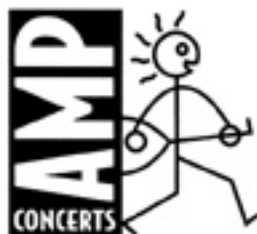


AMP evolves into music presenter

by Kelly Koepke



Four years ago, two newcomers to Albuquerque decided that if they wanted to hear music in an intimate setting, without the cigarette smoke and other trappings of the bar scene, they needed to do something. They wanted an experience similar to the coffee shop scene in San Diego,

a place where they had both lived and where they met in the early 1990s.

Jeff Hanson and Neal Copperman, two techies with a passion for small concerts, started AMP House Concerts using their connections with performers they'd met at those concerts and around the country. From a living room barely capable of holding the 35 friends and family members who attended the first performance, AMP has evolved into a presenting organization rapidly approaching its 75th event, with at least one concert per month since July 2000.

"Jeff bought a house, which has provided us with a bigger, more appropriate space for the house concerts," said Copperman, whose discussions with his business partner about the void in Albuquerque's music scene sparked the duo's success. "That's not to say there aren't great things going on here. There are lots. But we're nowhere near saturated, especially in the smaller concert format."

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In an effort to provide even more options to those whose music preferences have them avoiding large concerts, Copperman formed AMP Concerts, a presenting organization separate from AMP House Concerts. AMP House will continue to concentrate on the house concert format, where artists play at a private home in front of a small audience with a requested donation. AMP Concerts will bring artists to larger venues around town, selling tickets for an admission charge with a decided profit motive. "I even got my business license, hired

a graphic designer and placed advertisements," said Copperman, whose current contract job ends in January 2005.

AMP House Concerts' 700-plus email list provides a ready audience for Neal's vision. "I want to compliment other presenters, like the Outpost, on what they are doing," he said. "I simply want more than what's here. My passion is to offer music in smoke-free settings that aren't too late in the evening, with good sound and with seating. I still love small concerts and house concerts aren't going away. But I want a couple more concerts each month that are different and with wide audience

appeal, but that wouldn't fill up the Journal Pavilion or the larger venues in town."



AMP House Concert founders Jeff Hanson, left, and Neal Copperman, right, visit with house concert guests Pete & Maara Kennedy.

AMP House Concerts & AMP Concerts Upcoming Schedule

Nov 11: AMP House Concert with Prince Diabate. From Guinea, Diabate is a master kora player, which is a giant stringed instrument with a gourd base. With a small combo, he will perform a stripped-down night of African music.

Nov 13: AMP Concert's Dance Party with Prince Diabate at the Airdance Artspace. A larger group with more electric instruments, Afro-funk fusion in a space that's great for dancing.

Dec 4: AMP House Concert with Jeffrey Foucault and Brian Keane. Foucault is folk with a bluesy tinge, detailed and generally downbeat songs. Audiences have been clamoring for the return of Brian Keane ever since he all but stole the show from Stephen Pile and Foscoe Jones in January.

Feb 2: AMP House Concert with Harry Manx. Manx is a Canadian blues musician who is melding his acoustic blues with the style and texture of Indian ragas.

For info on any concert, contact abqmusic@att.net.