

Craig Smith | The New Mexican

A walk on the world side ¡Globalquerque!

When it comes to putting bands onstage, Tom Frouge and Neal Copperman have no fear. They also have a sense of humor, lots of audacity, pounds of patience, and a deep love for the songs, dances, and stories of our world's many cultures.

They've gained all that through years of creative work — Frouge with the Avokado Artists agency and Copperman as head of Albuquerque Music Presenters. And for the past three years, they've used it to plan and present ¡Globalquerque! The festival of world music and culture celebrates its third year at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque this weekend.

And if Frouge and Copperman have had to spend the past few weeks dealing with cancellations, scheduling changes, and crashing computers? It's all just part of the presenting biz.

"One of the things about world music is it's not a genre," Frouge said by phone as he raced between appointments last week in Albuquerque. "It's all genres. Yes, it's folk music by definition, even though dyed-in-the-wool folkies would disagree. In record stores it's what used to be called 'ethnic,' but it's grown beyond the definition. It's evolutionary music. It's not static.

"People in London, a musical mafia if you will, came up with the name almost 20 years ago," he added. "It's a retail-marketing thing. I bring that up as a person who programs Internet radio. World music today is everything from Senegalese hip-hop to Tahitian chants."

Even with some last-minute scrambling to replace acts canceled at the 11th hour, the artistic lineup for the event is formidable. It ranges from New Mexico's own La Familia Vigil and Anexo al Norte to flamboyant diva Koko Taylor and Her Blues Machine, Tibetan throat singer Yungchen Lhamo, octogenarian guitar master Puerto Plata from the Dominican Republic, the Dragon Art Studio troupe of Chinese puppeteers, and the Italian hip-hop/electronic vocal group Fiamma Fumana.

Other participants on the cultural center's three stages — two outdoors, one indoors — are Anjani's Kathak Dance of India, the U.K.-Cameroonian group Baka Beyond, Senegalese musician Lankandia Cissoko, smooth-voiced chanteuse Marta Gómez from Colombia, New York-based Moroccan musician Hassan Hakmoun, the Latvian band Ilgi, Native American performers Kevin Locke and Shelley Morningsong, and Argentine *chamamé* musician and accordion virtuoso Chango Spasiuk. The Global Drum Project unites four percussionists in a celebration of humankind's love for pulse and power: Mickey Hart of the Grateful Dead, Indian tabla master Zakir Hussain, renowned conguero Giovanni Hidalgo from Puerto Rico, and Nigerian rhythm king Sikiru Adepoju.

Performances begin at 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Sept. 21 and 22. Free family events are planned from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 22. A Global Village of vendors, organizations, and food booths rounds out the offerings.

Frouge and Copperman have always had a broad goal, Frouge said, to come up with a "big tent" approach, though one with definite boundaries. As he put it, the tent is broad, "but it does have flaps that we close from time to time. We do believe that all the music needs to be identifiably connected to some roots tradition. That's why we felt we could bring Koko Taylor in. We also bring purely traditional music, such as La Familia Vigil, one of the gems of Northern New Mexico music."

For Copperman, watching the event grow has been rewarding. "From the first to the second year, there was a big growth in what the festival is," he said — also by phone and caught between constant production and planning meetings. "It went from being a concert showcase to a



From the tropics to Tibet and everywhere in between: Above, Puerto Plata of the Dominican Republic; top, throat singer Yungchen Lhamo; and right, the diva-licious Koko Taylor



Marc Norberg