



DIFFERENT LOOKS: The May Fire's multicultural roots find diverse expression in their versatile songs.

POSTED SEPTEMBER 04, 2008 12:00 AM

MAY DAY

Cult indie rock group May Fire hits Salinas.

By [Stuart Thornton \(/search?q=%22Stuart Thornton%22\)](#)

Cattarina Tasso is the sort of woman who [EMAIL \(./@@EMAILAFRIEND\)](#) • [PRINTER FRIENDLY \(./@@PRINTERFRIENDLY\)](#) • [COMMENT \(#COMMENTGROKLET\)](#) haunts the minds of male indie rock fans. In *Guitar Player Magazine*, there's a picture of Tasso, the guitarist and vocalist of the San Francisco indie rock band The May Fire, playing a big red guitar. Her lips are as red and tempting as cherry frosting, and her eyes are hidden beneath raven black bangs.

The May Fire's sound will also be attractive to indie fans. "No Clone" comes on like Sonic Youth attempting to play New Wave. Sung in Spanish, "Marcha" is a thick guitar stomp until a summery chorus comes in.

The Spanish lyrics on "Marcha" betray the band's multicultural roots. Tasso is a native of Chile; her band also includes guitarist Nachito and drummer El Pipe from Colombia, along with bassist Rob Gwin, the token gringo from Connecticut.

After forming in 2004, the Los Angeles band moved to San Francisco. Tasso explains in the *Guitar Player Magazine* piece that the group's relocation changed The May Fire's sound. "I was so mad that the weather was so cold and gloomy all the time that my style began to morph to reflect my dark surroundings," she says.

In the same article, the guitar player reveals how she has started to incorporate elements of Spanish boleros into The May Fire's rock music. "A bolero's groove drives very much like a punk song, so it was kind of easy slipping a bolero feel into a punk song," she says.

Later, Tasso describes her relationship with the band's other songwriter. "El Pipe and I started this band together, so we have a special songwriting bond," she says. "It's the combination of a lollipop and a shot of bourbon."

It doesn't take much to determine which one is the lollipop.

The May Fire play with Monte Negro and Astra Heights 7:30pm Sunday, Sept 7, at the Fox Theater, 241 S. Main St., Salinas. \$15. 758-8459.