



# Eye for Talent, Inc.

The Best in World Music

FEUFOLLET

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Setting the swamp ablaze.

Since the beginning of the Louisiana French Renaissance of the early 1970s, hundreds of young Cajun musicians have opted to play the music of their heritage. Some have gone beyond style and performance to also learn the language of that heritage. Learning how to perform licks and tricks on the accordion, the fiddle, or the guitar is one thing, but becoming fluent in the original language of the songs is quite another.

The members of Feufollet, whose name translates to “swamp fire,” have made critical and artistic investments in their Cajun roots. Most of the members have attended French immersion programs, and they have all become conversant in the language of their ancestors. Singing and even composing in French, they continue to innovate and expand the poetic tradition of the genre. In a very real way, they represent the best hope for the future of our culture. Who else will sing the intensely soulful lyrics that have long characterized Cajun music? And who will appreciate them, in addition to dancing to them?

Feufollet has carefully considered the stylistic history of Cajun music and mastered its techniques. They have been touring and performing widely since they were quite young, and first gained national exposure on NPR as teens. Some people, who initially may have had the notion that they were interesting because they were cute kids, have found out quickly that they are immensely skilled musicians who just happen to be younger than most.

The music of Feufollet represents the seamless integration of ancient and thoroughly modern sounds and styles. Their Cajun songs are as playful and challenging as we expect young music to be, providing an example of the cultural continuity Dewey Balfa touted—the kind that not only preserves the individual products of a tradition, but also the activities that generated them. When tradition is alive and well, it will produce new forms that are fully invested in their own times. This is what Feufollet is all about: innovation with respect to past models. If Cajun music legends Iry LeJeune and Dennis McGee were twenty-something today, they would likely be in Feufollet.

The fact that Cajun culture would have not only survived into the twenty-first century, but would also have produced these fiery, young musicians, playing the music unselfconsciously, though not without a certain bite, and for equally hip, young audiences from South Louisiana to northern New Brunswick, is a sure sign of its vitality.

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