

the Midnight Serenaders

Proving that hot jazz and vintage pop of the 1920's and 30's is as relevant as ever in the present day, the Midnight Serenaders provide an infectious and irreverent take on the raucous and carefree music of "The Jazz Age." Far from a simple repertory band, they infuse their repertoire with a genuine groove and energy truly appropriate to this revolutionary music that took the country by storm in its heyday. Led by the charming frontline of crooner/rhythm guitarist Doug Sammons and ukelele-strumming chanteuse Dee Settlemier, the Serenaders' repertoire consists of classics by the likes of Fats Waller and Ethel Waters, obscure tunes by Clarence Williams carefully unearthed by the band, and an increasing number of Settlemier's originals which mesh indistinguishably with the classic repertoire.



Photo by Miri Stebiwka

Sammons and Settlemier's vocals and strumming are backed up by a cast of fine musicians from the vibrant Portland, Oregon music scene. Bassist Pete Lampe's casual on-stage swagger belies his rock solid groove, which when combined with Sammons' mastery of the rhythm guitar creates such a solid pulse that no drummer is required. The unique and brilliant addition of Doc Stein on Hawaiian steel guitar is one of the band's strongest points. Stein floats over the steady swing, providing just the right amount of vintage tropical flair to elevate the ensemble sound to a unique level, and even provides an occasional Hawaiian instrumental number for a stylistic change of pace. The ensemble is rounded out by the melodious clarinet and saxophone of David Evans, a long-time New Orleans resident who brings the bluesy grit of the Crescent City to the Pacific Northwest, and the thrilling and powerful trumpet of Garner Pruitt, whose crackling style bursts out from behind his vintage red-and-white bucket mute.

The Midnight Serenaders have been a fixture on Portland's music scene since 2005 and have built up a strong fan base across many demographics. At a Serenaders show you'll find a healthy sampling of Portland's many swing dancers, traditional and modern jazz enthusiasts, young couples out for a classy evening, folks who remember this music from their own youth, hipsters in vintage clothing, and many others who appreciate the band's tight and thrilling fast numbers, sultry and risque blueses, and beautifully harmonized ballads. The band has performed at many of Portland's finest venues and festivals around the region such as the Sun Valley Jazz Jamboree, Cascade Head Music Festival, Willamette Valley Music Festival, and Portland Lindy Exchange.

The Serenaders have recently released their third album, "Hot Lovin," after their first two albums "Magnolia" (2007) and "Sweet Nothin's" (2009) were release to critical acclaim. The Portland Tribune declared that their first album "revived lost classics from the vintage jazz era while keeping the inherent giddiness of that time perfectly intact," and Portland Monthly says of their second album: "Plenty of bands attempt to recapture the jive sounds of the Roaring Twenties, but most of them just sound, well, jive. Midnight Serenaders...sashay from torch song to hot jazz with panache and a genuine respect for yesterday's hit parade." Their new album features some new originals by Settlemier and ups the ante with the presence of several special guests with notable Portland jazz pianist/composer Andrew Oliver on piano and on accordion Eric Stern, leader of the popular Bohemian cabaret act Vagabond Opera. The Midnight Serenaders continue to swing along in the modern age, helping to ensure that the joyous swing of one of America's most original art forms will never be forgotten.

www.midnightserenaders.com

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