

EDMONDS CENTER *for the*ARTS



PINK MARTINI *Featuring Storm Large* **JANUARY 27**

*Sponsored by
Deidre Blankenship, Leslie & Mike Foley,
and Crystal Wilson*

Band Bio

Now in its 31st year, the unstoppable engine of joy that is Pink Martini continues to bring founder Thomas Lauderdale's mission of multi-cultural connection and inclusion to concert stages on six continents. Presenting a mélange of catchy old-fashioned pop, global color, foot-tapping big band sound, and Hollywood glamour, Oregon's most famous "little orchestra" performs music intended to appeal to everyone regardless of age or background.

Wanting an antidote to the lackluster bands playing fundraisers for his favorite causes, Lauderdale had a vision to bring more beautiful and inclusive musical soundtracks to galas for civil rights, affordable housing, the environment, libraries, public broadcasting, education, and parks. Drawing inspiration in music from all over the world, and hoping to appeal to conservatives and liberals alike, he founded Pink Martini in 1994. A year later, Lauderdale called China Forbes, his friend from Harvard, and asked her to join the ensemble; she relocated to Portland to become the band's first full-time lead singer, and soon collaborated with Lauderdale on a number of the band's favorite original songs.

As the band grew beyond its humble beginnings, Lauderdale lovingly welcomed more and more incredible musicians into the band's family with open arms, creating regular collaborations with a wide variety of gifted singers, including the inimitable Storm Large, NPR's dashing Ari Shapiro, the soulful Edna Vazquez, America's Got Talent finalist Jimmie Herrod, and international singing sensation Meow Meow. On record, the band has also worked with iconic talents such as Japanese superstar Saori Yuki, Iranian legend Googoosh, Rufus Wainwright, Michael Feinstein, Georges Moustaki, Jimmie Scott, and many more.

Featuring a dozen musicians, Pink Martini performs songs in over 25 languages around the world. Says Lauderdale, "We're very much an American band, but we spend a lot of time abroad and therefore have the incredible diplomatic opportunity to represent a broader, more inclusive America... the America which remains the most heterogeneously populated country in the world... composed of people of every country, every language, every religion." The band made its European debut at the Cannes Film Festival in 1997 and its orchestral debut with the Oregon Symphony the following year. Since then, Pink Martini has played with more than 75

orchestras internationally, including Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Pops, National Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, and the BBC Concert Orchestra at London's Royal Albert Hall. Other appearances include a performance at the official post-Oscars celebration Governors Ball, four sold-out concerts at Carnegie Hall, the opening party of the remodeled Museum of Modern Art in New York, multiple sellouts and a festival opening at Montreal Jazz Festival, and multiple appearances, including sellouts, at the Hollywood Bowl and Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles.

On its in-house label Heinz Records, Pink Martini has sold millions of albums worldwide and released over a dozen recordings. Pink Martini released the acclaimed EP *Bella ciao* in Spring 2025, featuring the anti-fascist title track sung by Storm Large. Early in 2026, the band will unveil its full-length collaborative release with Googoosh, and plans to have a new album out by the end of 2026. During China Forbes's current sabbatical, the perpetually energetic and evolving band will continue to tour internationally with a number of its favorite singers, sharing its message of global community and joy through its music.

