



CHERRY POPPIN' DADDIES

AND

DAVINA & THE VAGABONDS

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Sponsored by

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THE DADDIES

In the past few years Cherry Poppin' Daddies have become the kind of band that you would want to book if you were throwing a soiree at the Gatsby mansion. Penning elegant, lush, pitch perfect arrangements of much of the great American songbook, from Cole Porter to Frank Sinatra, the Daddies have surprised many - likely familiar with them from the early 90's-whose limited exposure to the band undoubtedly consists of an image of spray painted vans careening across the US as an iconoclastic, misfit part of an already marginalized punk/ska scene. In fact the Daddies have of late put together a number of excellent swing/ jazz sit down theatre type shows, each tailored to a different era of swing music: a "Jazz Age Lawn Party" consisting of roaring 20's and Cotton Club Era material, a swanky "Live at the Sands" type tribute to the Rat Pack, and a World War 2 "Christmas Canteen" show that is part Tiki, part Benny Goodman and comes across like a radio broadcast from Guadalcanal circa 1942. The sheer craftsmanship and professional attention to detail of these performances have shed new light on this criminally underestimated band.

On top of being a show band nonpareil, the Daddies have an "oh by the way" double platinum ability to pen original material that, while influenced by a history of American popular music, is wholly modern lyrically, and itself stands up as classic.

The 1997 release of Zoot Suit Riot set the bar for the neo-swing movement of the era in terms of originality, lyrical depth, and flat out musical sales.

When you see the Daddies perform their original material you are struck by the poetry and audacity of artistic vision.

Singer songwriter/ bandleader Steve Perry puts it this way, "Lately, by laying our hands on the great American songbook, we have been trying to fill in for audiences the historical back story of what inspires our original brand of Americana, because in essence that is what I consider us to be, an Americana band. But instead of taking mostly from a delta blues tradition-like many of the bands labeled "Americana"-we adhere mostly to a pre rock, pre mid 50's, hot jazz and essentially Tin Pan Alley tradition. Then we attempt to deconstruct and détourne those set of tropes to fit modern themes, be that something like child abuse or say the opioid crisis. It's unfortunate, but I believe it comforts modern audiences to see that we are able to play, in an orthodox fashion, material that is in the tradition, before they allow us to reach out for something unfamiliar, multifaceted, or god forbid anti-bourgeois in point of view like many of our originals are "Sadly, over the past year the band has been laying low and playing a bit closer to home in order that Perry can be a caregiver to his wife, business partner, and video muse, Yvette "Cherry" Perry who was recently diagnosed with stage IV colorectal cancer. "This setback for our family has brought us closer to our fans, who have been so giving of their best wishes and helping with small donations to Yvette's cancer care. We pledge to continue our advocacy work nationally toward earlier colorectal screening protocols and baseline cancer research so that this scourge that has been loosed on so many families like ours can be wiped out sooner rather than later."

Proximity to home has allowed the Eugene, Oregon band to recently finish a new recording slated for release in late 2018 called Bigger Life. Perry says, "Bigger Life is 14 songs that will allow us to touch base with our punk/ ska audience. We will continue to play the all swing, classy theater type shows that are our bread and butter, but in addition, at some point in 2019 and 2020, we would like to book a few special tours and play occasional festivals where we crank it up and play only ska punk, hopefully joining forces with some of the bands that befriended us as we were all coming up in this business. This new record turned out really special and we are excited for people to get their ears on it."

DAVINA & THE VAGABONDS

Davina Sowers and the Vagabonds have created a stir on the national music scene with their high-energy live shows, level A musicianship, sharp-dressed professionalism, and Sowers' commanding stage presence. With influences ranging from Fats Domino and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band to Aretha Franklin and Tom Waits, the band is converting audiences one show at a time, from Vancouver to Miami and across Europe.

Much like the music, the story spurns era, expectation, and classification. The often unbelievable, sometimes harrowing, and wholly inspiring journey of Davina Sowers gave birth to her eponymous band Davina and The Vagabonds in 2004. As the tale goes, she grew up in the economically depressed Allegheny town of Altoona, PA, which she now describes as "awesome in the industrial era, but horrible for high school." She was adopted by her much older stepfather when he was in his 80s; he passed away when she was just 13. Through him and his Edison phonograph, she first heard The Ink Spots, Sidney Bechet, Louis Armstrong and Louis Prima, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, and many others. "Great man. He was my angel and still is," she says.

On her own, she vividly recalls hours in front of the record player where she religiously spun Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, and Simon and Garfunkel records belonging to her folk singer mom.

To this day, Davina still refers to music as "my first and eternal love." Despite early dalliances with classical piano and guitar, she developed a heavy drug habit in high school, which morphed into heroin dependency, left her homeless, sent her in and out of jail, and brought on all manner of trouble. Kicking dope on the streets, she "got clean, started the band, and worked [her] ass off every day since."

Davina and the Vagabonds shine every time they play. To date, they've performed in forty-five states, twelve European countries, and two Canadian provinces. Not to mention, they've earned feverish acclaim from the Chicago Tribune, NPR, and more in addition to performing on BBC's international favorite late-night program Later... With Jools Holland and appearing on PBS's Bluegrass Underground.



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