

The Jim Cullum Jazz Band



The Jim Cullum Jazz Band has appeared in such major venues as Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap, major worldwide jazz festivals, and stars in its own public radio series, Riverwalk Jazz, broadcasting since 1987, heard on over 150 Public Radio stations nationwide and on the internet.

The Jim Cullum Jazz Band plays jazz in the classic manner, that is, in the style of small, hot ensembles prior to WWII. The band's repertoire covers a lot of ground--from 19th-century cakewalks to the small pre-war Benny Goodman ensembles.

The core of the band's music consists of the sounds of Jelly Roll Morton, Original Dixieland Jazz Band, New Orleans Rhythm Kings, King Oliver Creole Jazz Band, Louis Armstrong, and Sidney Bechet, as well as a heavy emphasis on Bix Beiderbecke and Hoagy Carmichael.

In keeping with the band's historical point of view, period instruments and performance practices are often used. Each member of the band is a specialist in historically informed jazz styles.

Leader Jim Cullum plays a cornet (instead of the trumpet or flugelhorn used in modern jazz), which was the instrument preferred by early jazz masters King Oliver, Louis Armstrong and Bix Beiderbecke. Howard Elkins plays a 1920s-vintage Epiphone archtop 4-string tenor guitar and a 1935 Gibson tenor banjo. Don Mopsick plays an old German double bass set up with gut strings and high action in the manner of the pre-amplified era. Mike Waskiewicz uses drumming techniques and equipment more commonly found in the earlier drumming styles of Zutty Singleton, Ray Bauduc, and Baby Dodds.

From 1993-2005, the Jim Cullum Jazz Band was on the faculty of the Stanford Summer Jazz Workshop.

The Jim Cullum Jazz Band and the producers of Riverwalk Jazz, in partnership with the San Antonio YMCA are currently developing an after-school enrichment program for elementary school children called The Jim Cullum Video Curriculum.

In April, 2007, the Jim Cullum Jazz Band completed an epic tour of Russia that took them from Moscow to eastern Siberia and back west to the Baltic Sea. They played 9 concerts in 17 days and covered 7 time zones. The Russian audiences were wildly enthusiastic in their applause and appreciation for the band's music.

Agency
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