

Popular jazz band back for Valentine's concert Sat.



Grosman ensemble plays classic tunes from Ellington, Armstrong, etc.

By ROBIN DOWNTON-POIRIER

Special to The Champion

Tickets are going fast for Saturday evening's George Grosman and Swing Noir performance at Halton Region Museum.

The Valentine's concert is part of the Hearthside Dinner and Music Series, and is certainly a popular addition to the line-up — given each year's ticket sales.

George Grosman and Swing Noir are eagerly awaiting their return to Milton Saturday evening.

"George Grosman and Swing Noir have played here for seven years and are amazing so the tickets always sell quickly," said series co-ordinator Ken Baker. "We expect a sold out performance each time they play."

The Toronto-based jazz and blues ensemble have been playing together for several years, although with some recent band changes. They play primarily older jazz tunes from legends such as Duke Ellington, George Gershwin, and Louis Armstrong.

"Swing Noir is my main jazz group. We play jazz music with some 'ethnic' influences, meaning a few gypsy jazz songs, like Minor Swing and Dark Eyes," noted Mr. Grosman. "Right now, the membership is in flux, as we've recently gone through some personnel changes, but the current members are Pete Johnston on bass (played together for about two years), Bohdan Turok on percussion (have worked together for six years), Ian Monro on trumpet, a brand new member and is very talented, and Brandon Walker on saxophones. He's originally from California where he recorded with some of the jazz greats. I've known Brandon for four years, though we've only recently started collaborating."

Mr. Grosman has two other bands — The George Grosman Band and Music on the Corner, that he plays with, each with varying music styles.

"The George Grosman Band plays my original compositions exclusively. We record often and perform about 12 concerts a year," he said. "Music on the Corner performs in the Czech language and we play for the Czech and Slovak community, not just in Ontario but also in Quebec, Manitoba and the U.S. All three bands are quite different but the common thread is my love of melodic, expressive music and ballads."

An attentive and appreciative audience make Milton one of Mr. Grosman's favourite places to perform, he stressed.

"I can say without reservation that this is one of our favourite places to play and one of our favourite concerts of the season. The audience is always very attentive. They love our music and we love them in return. The acoustics in the room are great, as is the food, and the atmosphere of the whole building is unique."

For more information on the Hearthside Dinner and Music Series or to purchase tickets, visit the Halton Region Museum's Web site at www.region.halton.on.ca/museum/newsevents. For more information or to hear samples of George Grosman and Swing Noir, visit www.georgegrosman.com.

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