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## Pumpstock Features Up-and-Coming Musicians in Family Friendly Environment <sup>[1]</sup>

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**By:**

Christopher A. Wardell



*Bassist extraordinaire Missy Raines and her band New Hip will bring their music to Bailey Park in East Lansing for Saturday's 10th edition of Pumpstock.*

If you've ever been on the fence about attending Pumpstock, East Lansing's annual outdoor Americana and folk music festival, keep this in mind: many of the artists who have performed there have gone on to play much larger venues.

For example, past Pumpstock performer Billy Strings, the multi-instrumentalist and bluegrass favorite, is currently making the rounds on the national music festival circuit, performing with the likes of perennial jam band favorite The String Cheese Incident, ex-members of the Grateful Dead, and Greensky Bluegrass, another Michigan band now hitting it big. Lindsay Lou and the Flatbellies, the Lansing Unionized Vaudeville Spectacle, and The Jill Jack Band have all performed at Pumpstock and are now nationally recognized.

In short, Pumpstock has been an important stepping stone for up-and-coming musicians.

Now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, this year's festival runs from 2-8 p.m. Saturday at Bailey Park.

Pumpstock musicians and bands are chosen by curator Dudley "Smitty" Smith in conjunction with the Pump House Concerts, for which he serves as the concert booker.

"The best thing about Pumpstock is the great musicians that we get to perform," Smith said. "Most of them rarely, if ever, perform around the mid-Michigan area, and they are all very highly acclaimed. Missy Raines, who is a seven-time IBMA (International Bluegrass Musician Award) bass player of the year, and the first woman to ever win the award.

"If you've been to a Pump House Concert, the music similar in style, but often a musician that plays solo at a Pump House Concert brings a full band to Pumpstock."



*Featured performer Jen Sygit says "the real magic of Pumpstock lies in the quaint, family-friendly size of the festival."*

The main stage will be headlined by Missy Raines and the New Hip, singer-songwriter and "The Voice" contestant David Luning, local songstress Jen Sygit and her band The Dirty Looks, gypsy-swing outfit Olivia Mainville and The Aquatic Troupe, as well as The Matt Bliton Band, another mid-Michigan act.

The second stage will feature newcomers Nicholas Merz, Abbey Hoffman, Wes Millhouse, and Tania Watt.

"I think the real magic of Pumpstock lies in the quaint, family-friendly size of the festival," Sygit said. "It's held in a cute park (complete with playground) in a residential neighborhood in East Lansing, yet the music quality rivals festivals several times its size."

Sygit, who's still riding high off of her latest release, 2018's "It's About Time," will be accompanied by Mike Lynch on keys and accordion, Geoff Ian Lewis on drums, and Brennen Duncan on bass.

Produced by Dominic John Davis (of Steppin' In It and bassist in Jack White's band), "It's About Time" is a top-five finalist for two Independent Music Awards including "Best Americana Song" for the title track "It's About Time".

### **Inviting environment for an afternoon or early evening of entertainment**

In Smith's view, Pumpstock is all about camaraderie with your fellow neighbor.

"What is great is the community and family friendly feel of the concert," Smith said. "If you live in East Lansing, you will know people in the audience when you arrive. If you don't know someone, place your blanket and chairs near them, and you'll soon make a new friend."

Mainville is particularly excited to perform in East Lansing because her Pumpstock debut also happens to fall on her birthday.

She's also looking forward to leaving an impression on people who've never seen her perform live before. As she explains, each onstage performance is different.



"I most certainly wouldn't try to convince anyone to see us," Mainville (above) said. "But, if somebody wanted to know what they'd be getting into and how it differs from other bands' shows, I'd say we have a great appreciation for old music between the (19)20s and '60s, and it shows in our music."

"Nothing is scripted and we definitely have a ton of fun on stage. If you like old New Orleans jazz, old-western, surf or '60s chamber pop, you might enjoy Olivia and the Aquatic Troupe."

In addition to the music there will be activities for kids with glitter tattoos and balloons by Rogo the Clown. There will also be a Ukulele Petting Zoo by Music is the Foundation, a nonprofit established to fund music programs in Michigan classrooms and communities.

There is also a playground in Bailey Park for kids to enjoy.

Cottage Inn Pizza and Blue Owl Coffee will be on hand to supply the food and beverages, and other vendors on hand will include Michigan Shirt Works and Breeze Beautiful Bling Jewelry.

Dogs are welcome, and attendees are encouraged to bring folding chairs or blankets.

Smith says no one except the musicians are paid, making Pumpstock a truly all-volunteer event.

"Pumpstock is inexpensive entertainment, and like any good nonprofit, there is very little

overhead,? Smith said. ?Workers are volunteers, and we have a few precious sponsorships, a small city of East Lansing Arts Commission grant, and all of the equipment is borrowed for the day. With this sort of business plan, all of the donations, and more than ninety (90) percent of all the money that comes in goes directly, on the day of the festival, to the musicians. Musicians perform for a small guarantee, and all money beyond that is divided among them.?

Tickets for Pumpstock are \$10 at the gate and kids are free.

Bailey Park is located at 300 Bailey Street, a block and a half north of Albert Street. For more information, visit the Pumpstock page on Facebook.

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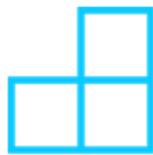
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