

# REVIEW: HOT SARDINES RE-HEAT THE OLDIES

By: Greg Haymes  
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The rock-era swing revival probably hit its peak on Jan. 31, 1999, when Big Bad Voodoo Daddy played the halftime show at Super Bowl XXXIII. But that doesn't mean that it's over.

In fact, New York City's Hot Sardines swung into The Egg's **Swyer Theatre** on Friday evening, the same night the like-minded Postmodern Jukebox was playing down the street at the **Palace Theatre**. The difference between the two bands is that while Postmodern Jukebox re-interprets today's contemporary pop hits in vintage style and arrangements, the Hot Sardines go all in, reviving the songs as well as the sounds of the bygone era.

Led by pianist **Evan Palazzo** and chanteuse **Elizabeth Bougerol**, the eight-member band — featuring a three-piece horn section and, yes, even a tap dancer — swing-swang-swung through an 85-minute concert filled with gems from yesteryear, dustin' 'em off, puttin' a bit of spit 'n' polish on 'em and knockin' it out of the park. From the down 'n' dirty opener, "When I Get Low (I Get High)," to the ukulele-fueled encore of "I Wanna Be Like You" from "The Jungle Book" (swung in French, by the way), the band was utterly charming, albeit admittedly a bit "punchy and jet-lagged," playing their first show back home since a 10-concert tour of Japan.

Along the way, they served up a variety of Gypsy jazz standards ("Sweet Sue," again sung in French), jug-band favorites (a sassy "I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate"), New Orleans Mardi Gras staples (a rollicking rendition of Professor Longhair's "Big Chief," with bassist **Evan Crane** switching over to Sousaphone) and show tunes (**Rodgers & Hart**'s "Thou Swell" as a showcase for drummer Alex Raderman).

Tap dancer "Fast Eddie" Francisco kept his toes tappin' all night long, but his fleet-footed dazzle proved to be most dynamic during his showcase on **Count Basie**'s "Cute."

And although they never mentioned it, the band deserves kudos for shining a spotlight on the works of the women of the jazz era, as they offered **Lil Hardin**'s "Struttin' With Some Barbecue" (with Bougerol strapping on a washboard for additional percussion), **Billie Holiday**'s blues ballad "Mean to Me" and **Bessie Smith**'s pleading "Baby, Won't You Please Come Home."

At the end of the night, Bougerol thanked the crowd for "proving that music from 100 years ago is not dead."

Source: <https://www.timesunion.com/tuplus-features/article/Hot-Sardines-prove-there-s-still-life-in-vintage-9518623.php>