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The Raventones: Randy Hamme (left) and TR Kelley produce a sound bigger than most duos and that falls into many musical genres.

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## Local twosome packs punch into genre-bending music

The Raventones bounce from funk to country with invigorating results

By **Natasha Chilingierian**  
Pulse Reporter

The Raventones may be small, but their sound is big.

Randy Hamme and TR Kelley comprise the local duo, which produces more music than the average twosome via Hamme and Kelley's acoustic and baritone electric guitars, five-string fretless bass and vocals, and Hamme's drums.

"The band is very small, but it sounds very huge," Kelley said. "We make a lot of noise for just two people."

And that noise fits into numerous musical genres. Hamme described The Raventones' music as a combination of country blues, hippie jam, funky soul, jazz, rural bohemian soul and twangy country, and called it "all over the place."

"You never know what we will come up with," Hamme said. "We can go from playing surf tunes to 1950s jazz band music. TR flows between these genres very well."

The Raventones are based on Kelley's vast background in music. Kelley, who comes from a musical family and says she was "caught in the folk tradition," began playing bass for country and classic rock bands in bars at the age of 14. Her big break came in 1993 when she joined the all-female folk quartet Babes With Axes, which she said was "a huge deal." She said her sound concentrates on jazz,

folk and soul hybrids but also branches into other categories except rock and roll.

"I go back to the pre-rock and roll era," she said. "I'm also into weird stuff like powwow music, electronica — pretty much anything."

**"You never know what we will come up with. We can go from playing surf tunes to 1950s jazz band music."**

**Randy Hamme**  
The Raventones

Kelley first knew Hamme as a huge fan of her Babes With Axes shows. A year ago, Hamme decided to pick up drumming, then he and Kelley formed The Raventones. Hamme said the band has meshed well despite the fact that Kelley's performing experience surpasses his. So far they have put on shows in the Eugene area and scored college and independent radio station play around the world. Last August they released their first album, "Odd Birds."

Local musician Laura Kemp, who was a member of Babes With Axes and is a close friend of Hamme's and Kelley's, said The Raventones' success lies in their different backgrounds and melodic balancing act.

"(Kelley) does more of a jazzy thing, and (Hamme) comes from the 1980s rock era," she said. "He's

a super tasty drummer, and he doesn't overpower her. He doesn't get in the way."

Visually, their acts are just as loud as their music. Hamme described their shows as "colorful and rich."

"I have a big sparkly Ludwig drum kit and hair down to my waist," he said. "TR wears a lot of vibrant, crushed-velvet type outfits."

The Raventones have two upcoming local performances: Saturday at 8 p.m. at the Deadwood Community Center, located about 65 miles west of Eugene on Deadwood Creek Road, and Feb. 26 at 8:30 p.m. at Luna Jazz Club, located at 30 E. Broadway. Kelley said Saturday's show is oriented to a hippie audience and will include lots of surprises.

"The show (at the Deadwood Community Center) will be colorful and jam-oriented," she said. "A lot of our shows are spontaneous, and they especially are here."

Hamme said he feels confident that The Raventones will continue their music career. They plan to book festivals, spread the word about their gigs and record a new album.

"It looks like the group is here to stay," he said. "We're stable in our personal and business life. I see us playing together for a long time."

The Deadwood Community Center show is all ages and requires a fee of \$5 to \$10. The Luna Jazz Club performance is a 21 and over show and will have a \$5 cover charge.

Contact the Pulse reporter at [natashachilingierian@dailymerald.com](mailto:natashachilingierian@dailymerald.com).

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