

# Garden Home's Matt Miner is keeping the music live with small concerts

By KC Cowan  
The Southwest Portland Post

Portland is known for having an outstanding music scene, with jazz to rock and everything in between. But when you no longer want to hassle with the crowds at the Rose Garden, or risk your hearing with mega-loud concerts, you start looking around for something different.

You just may find it at O'Connor's Vault, a small music venue in the former Multnomah Bank and next door to O'Connor's Restaurant and Bar in Multnomah Village.

The man behind the music is Garden Home resident Matt Miner, a former television producer who has always had love for a good song.

About 10 years ago, he heard a story

on National Public Radio about people doing "house concerts," where professional musicians performed in a private home setting.

"And then I happened to run into (musician) Richard Moore. And said, would you be willing to try this thing out?"

The answer was yes, and Moore brought in jazz singer Mary Katterly to round out the show. Miner sold tickets, and his wife, Sasha Kaplan, decided to cook a buffet for the guests. They charged \$12.50 a head.

"And from that one, we did 50 of those in six and a half years, to at the end we were charging upwards of \$30 to \$35 per person and seating 40 to 45 people for the show," Miner said.

But the toll of hosting all those people and moving his furniture for each show made Miner start looking around for a

venue outside his home. O'Connor's looked like a good fit, and Miner said owner Steve Arel immediately jumped on board.

"The management and staff are really supportive. Steve actually kicks in money to the till, and he runs the door. He's very supportive, whether it looks like it will be a moneymaker or not. He lets me do what I want to do here."

And what Miner wants to do is create as intimate a music experience as he did in his own home. That's why O'Connor's works so well. There are no distractions like a bunch of rowdy bar patrons in the background. The environment lets you focus on the music.

"It's not about the scene, it's about the music," says Miner.

Mostly what you'll find at these concerts are acoustic performances in

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Matt Miner stands outside O'Connor's Vault in Multnomah Village where he regularly schedules intimate music events. (Post photo by KC Cowan)

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