

**Eric Stern Music**  
**4128 N. Kerby Ave.**  
**Portland OR 97217**  
**Phone: 503 331 8544**

**email: [booking@ericsternevents.com](mailto:booking@ericsternevents.com)**

**[www.ericsternevents.com](http://www.ericsternevents.com)**

Emerging from the emerald twilight of Portland Oregon, sepiatonic troubadour Eric Stern, the Northwest's own premiere operatic tenor, accordionist, pianist, composer and consummate showman, founder and leader of Vagabond Opera continues his alchemical and absinthe-tinged forays into the wee hours of the morning, on steamships, and in exotic ports of call, in London alleyways and Marseille brothels, to concoct Steampunk Cabaret.



Eric Stern has appeared on NPR and performed at the Kennedy Center, The Great American Music Hall in San Francisco, Joe's Pub in NYC, , throughout the Northwest, and internationally from Portland to Paris to Poland. Stern has appeared with Balkan BeatBox, Jason Webley, The Decemberists, Devotchka, Unwoman, and many others.

“Eric Stern, a mustachioed 36-year-old operatic tenor and accordion player...has a back story nearly as bohemian as the music he plays.”

~ The Washington Post

“Stern has found an exuberant and satisfying place where operatic vocal technique and popular idioms intersect... while also exposing unlikely audiences to the visceral pleasures of a Bel Canto voice.”

~ The NY Press

Eric Stern is best known for being the founder and artistic director of [Vagabond Opera](#), an ensemble that has achieved worldwide success. Vagabond Opera was created in 2002 by U.S. and European-trained opera singer and composer Eric Stern. Then disillusioned with the classical opera world, Stern created a new context for opera: Performance on a more intimate scale incorporating not only opera but elements of Weimar Cabaret, Arabic and Balkan forms, and the original music that springs from the ensemble's fertile creative work.

Eric Stern came to Portland 12 years ago after dropping out of the world of professional opera; it was a world which he admired, but also felt restrained by. After all, being a lead tenor isn't enough when you can play gypsy accordion, and compose your own operas! Not to mention the tinges of anarchism in his past—Stern grew up wandering the aisles of his parent's anarchist book and record store in Philadelphia, cultivating a radical musical sensibility.

A fine opera singer, Eric Stern has appeared in over thirty operas, including lead roles in *La Boheme*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *Carmen*. He studied and performed opera in Philadelphia, New York and Paris and co-founded the Jewish Theater Project in New Mexico. In his twenties he decided to return his Jewish roots; The western classical tradition is a powerful one but was missing the scales and modes he heard in his childhood. He is a passionate lover and advocate of the Yiddish Language.

At the age of 28 he hitchhiked across the United States and eventually landed in Portland, OR. Says Stern, "I wandered all around the U.S. playing my accordion and singing opera on street corners. Portland was the only place that seemed to appreciate any of it and soon my case was filled with money and rain."

The inspirational move to Portland paid off. An active and prolific composer, Stern has composed a large body of work for the Vagabond Opera ensemble and other projects (*Sepiatonic*, *Hungry Opera Machine*), and The Eric Stern Trio. In Portland he was commissioned in 2007 to compose the music for Tears Of Joy Puppet Theatre production of *Pinocchio* and most recently composed the full-length opera "Queen of Knives" which premiered in Portland in 2010.

His CD, "Stern little Stories", features some of Portland's finest musicians and delves more deeply into the territory covered by his customary cabaret forays. There are vivid portraits of Golems, black riders, chess fiends, and light-hearted sketches of Parisian artists and thieves. Stern takes inspiration from Amanda Palmer, Kurt Weill, and Tom Waits, but there is a silvery thread of humour running through the work too that bestows lightness to these depths. Stern has embraced Steampunk, and is formative in shaping it as a musical genre. Says Stern, "All these years, while performing with Vagabond Opera, I've had these other little songs trying to burst through, like little blackbirds caught in the chimney. I finally decided it was time to blow the roof off and let them fly and do their mischief. They are my envoys from my absinthe-tinged world of Stove-pipes and Steampunk."

His fascination for blending idioms and genres is apparent in the scope of his many influences and how he fuses them in his compositions. Aside from being fluent in Opera and Jazz, he is also highly versed in Klezmer, Classical and Middle-Eastern music and also nurtures a raging passion for the Bulgarian accordion where he has studied with the renowned Milen Slavov and Kalin Kirilov.

**[www.ericsternevents.com](http://www.ericsternevents.com)**