

Susie Hansen Latin Band -- Bio

Playing lively Afro-Cuban salsa and Latin jazz, electric violinist and vocalist Susie Hansen has been a favorite in Los Angeles for twenty-five years. Her ensemble, the Susie Hansen Latin Band, has performed to hundreds of thousands of people, and they love to get the audience up and dancing—as Susie says, “We aim for the feet!” Their music appeals to audiences of all ages and a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Susie and her band play familiar and traditional salsa in Spanish, many original salsa and Latin Jazz compositions, Latin-style interpretations of American jazz standards, tipico Cuban Charanga music, and great salsa and cha cha cha in English. Their music also includes the popular Latin dance styles of cumbia, merengue and bolero. The salsa vocals are authentic and improvisational. Her all-star band features Daniel Castillo on lead vocals and congas, Kaspar Abbo on lead vocals and guitar, Joe Rotondi on piano, and other great musicians. The band is truly a crowd pleaser with its rhythmic energy and drive.

Susie’s most CD release, *Representante de la Salsa*, has received great reviews around the world. Matt Marshall wrote in *Jazz Inside Magazine*, New York City: “She stakes a claim as the music’s Representative, not an unfounded boast . . . with her hard-driving Latin jazz and naturally powerful playing.” On LatinMusik.ch in Switzerland, Daniel Niedermann penned, “This album is beautiful! Its music enchants me.” According to Brian McGackin of the *Glendale News-Press*, “I am usually hesitant to rave so dramatically about the quality of a band, but I just cannot seem to help myself. Raucously fun and upbeat, it’s hard not to get up and dance.”

In 2004, Nelson Rodriguez of *Latin Beat* magazine chose Susie’s first CD *Solo Flight* as one of its top 100 Independent Latin Jazz recordings. As Mark Holston wrote in *JAZZIZ Magazine*, “her violin speaks the language of Latin jazz with total fluency.” Her second CD, *The Salsa Never Ends*, was dubbed a “Salsa anthem for the 2000s” in Europe, and features the song “La Salsa Nunca Se Acaba,” which has been popular across the country and around the world.

Don Heckman of the *Los Angeles Times* says, “Hansen was a ball of energy, creating an atmosphere of high voltage excitement.” Phil Elwood of the *San Francisco Examiner* described the band this way: “It’s a sizzling, swinging salsa band. Hansen can solo as if her bow was afire. The whole room was jumpin’ for joy.”

A long-time favorite in Los Angeles, Susie and her band play around 150 live performances each and every year, including for such events as the *Playboy Jazz Festival*, *Fiesta Broadway*, *San Jose Jazz Festival* and *Newport Beach Jazz Festival*. Susie has toured nationally with her band, and has personally appeared and/or recorded with Tito Puente, Orquesta Los Van Van, Celia Cruz, Giovanni Hidalgo, Vikki Carr, Orquesta Aragon, Paquito d’Rivera, Francisco Aguabella, Macy Grey, Jose Rizo’s *Jazz on the Latin Side All-Stars*, *Tierra*, *El Gran Combo*, *Rachel Z*, *Bobby Matos*, *Orquesta Broadway*, and *Sonora Poncena*. The band has opened for *Los Lobos*, *Diane Schuur*, *Andy Montanez*, *Tito Nieves*, *Nestor Torres* and more. Her recorded music has sold widely and charted well with radio and club DJs across the US and throughout the world.