



Community Planning and Economic Development Department

# News Release

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*Minneapolis City Goals:* A Safe Place to Call Home ▫ Jobs & Economic Vitality ▫ Eco-Focused ▫ Livable Communities, Healthy Lives ▫ Many People, One Minneapolis ▫ A City That Works

## **Jeremy Messersmith and Lucy Michelle and the Velvet Lapelles to perform at Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery**

***Proceeds support cemetery's restoration;  
Tickets on sale today***

Sept. 13, 2011 (MINNEAPOLIS) – [Jeremy Messersmith](#) and [Lucy Michelle and the Velvet Lapelles](#) will perform a benefit concert at Minneapolis' Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery (2925 Cedar Avenue South) on Saturday, October 8. Proceeds from the performance will help support the [Friends of the Cemetery's](#) efforts to restore the historic steel and limestone pillar fence that serves as the border of the cemetery along Lake Street and Cedar Avenue.

Tickets go on sale today and can be purchased at [Electric Fetus](#), [Hymie's Vintage Records](#), [Treehouse Records](#), and online at [www.friendsofthecemetery.org](http://www.friendsofthecemetery.org). Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the show. Tickets are limited, so advanced purchase is advised. Tickets are not required for children 12 years and under, however donations are accepted.

### **Event Details**

Messersmith's performance will include songs from his most recent album, [The Reluctant Graveyard](#), and his other critically acclaimed albums, [Silver City](#) and [Alcatraz Kid](#). Lucy Michelle and the Velvet Lapelles will perform songs from their most recent album, [Good of That](#), and their highly praised albums, [Special Party Time for Everybody](#) and [Orange Peels and Rattlesnakes](#). Attendees are encouraged to arrive early and participate in a smartphone history hunt, which will reveal highlights of the cemetery's rich legacy and its prominent place in local history. A kid-friendly version of the hunt will also be available. Gates open at 1:00 p.m., with Lucy Michelle and the Velvet Lapelles performing at 2:00 p.m. and Messersmith taking the stage at 4:00 p.m.

[Hola Arepa](#) and [Chef Shack](#) food trucks will sell food during the event. Bike parking will be provided by [Dero Bike Racks](#). Limited edition concert posters created by [Landland](#) will be available for purchase at the show.

Free parking available at the Greenway Office Building ([2801 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue South](#)) and the Community Education Services Building ([2225 East Lake Street](#)) parking lots. On-street parking is also available. No parking will be available within the cemetery.

### **About Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery**

Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery, established in 1853, is the oldest cemetery in Minneapolis. It is also a [Minneapolis landmark](#) and the only cemetery in Minnesota that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is the final resting place of nearly 20,000 pioneers, veterans and immigrants. It contains the graves of some of the first settlers of the city, many of whom made major contributions to local history; soldiers and veterans of the War of 1812, the Dakota Conflict, the Civil War, the Mexican American War, the Spanish-American War, and World War I; mid to late nineteenth century European immigrants, early African American citizens and abolitionists. Notable individuals buried in the cemetery include Philander Prescott, Charles W. Christmas, and William Goodridge. In 1925, a group began to organize to save Layman's Cemetery for its historical importance. The group's effort is recognized as an early, local attempt at historic preservation.

### **One of the Ten Most Endangered Historic Places**

In 2008, to raise awareness about the challenges of maintaining this landmark, the [Preservation Alliance of Minnesota](#) placed the cemetery on its "[Ten Most Endangered Historic Places](#)" list. Today, the cemetery is in need of substantial capital improvements. The most immediate of those is the restoration of the historic fence that lines the cemetery on Lake Street and Cedar Avenue. The steel fence is 1,953 linear feet and contains 3,510 pickets within 66 sections. Phase I and Phase II of the fence restoration project were completed in May 2011. The restoration included rehabilitation of the Cedar Avenue main gates and Lake Street gates as well as 12 other sections of fencing (see [before and after images](#)). Additional money is needed to restore the remaining 44 sections that are still in need of repair. The fence restoration project is estimated to cost \$1.4 million. For more about the fence restoration project, visit [www.friendsofthecemetery.org](http://www.friendsofthecemetery.org).

### **About Jeremy Messersmith & *The Reluctant Graveyard***

Singer-songwriter Jeremy Messersmith has become a prominent fixture of the Minneapolis music scene in the past decade. His third album, *The Reluctant Graveyard* (2010), tackles end-of-life issues and tells stories inspired by the inhabitants of Minneapolis' Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery (including [Toussant Grey](#), the subject of one of the album's songs). *Star Tribune* music critic, Chris Riemenschneider, said of the album "Despite its dark themes, *The Reluctant Graveyard* is a surprisingly upbeat, melodic, and sunny album. Where the light approach to dark themes truly works like a charm ([Star Tribune](#))." *The Reluctant Graveyard* was named as one of the top ten albums of 2010 by National Public Radio's "[All Songs Considered](#)," and best local album by the [Star Tribune](#). For more about Jeremy Messersmith, visit [www.jeremymessersmith.com](http://www.jeremymessersmith.com).

### **About Lucy Michelle and the Velvet Lapelles**

Lucy Michelle and the Velvet Lapelles are a Minneapolis-Saint Paul based sextet with a unique sound that combines Americana with hot club jazz and a hint of mountain gypsy. The band's fiery live performances have charmed audiences and critics alike from coast to coast. Since being named *City*

*Pages* "Best New Band" in 2008, they have independently released three full-length albums to critical praise. The Velvet Lapelles are currently working on their fourth full length album, set for release in the Spring of 2012, at Vacation Island Recording Studios in Brooklyn with acclaimed Producer Matt Boynton (MGMT, Beirut, Norah Jones). For more about Lucy Michelle and the Velvet Lapelles, visit <http://lapelles.com/>.

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