

ended the night with “Funky Tonight” and “Living in the City”—two songs that provided an appropriate soundtrack to the remainder of the lively crowd’s evening. **Heather Farr**

## DEAD WINTER CARPENTERS

TOP HAT  
MISSOULA, MONT.  
FEBRUARY 12

**Dead Winter Carpenters** have been a hard-touring group for long enough to know that not all shows are cakewalks. The group’s recent stop in Missoula, Mont. certainly had the odds stacked against it—a slow-season weekday play competing against other big acts in town—but that wasn’t enough to stop two sets worth of its signature driving, jammy Americana.

Fiddle player **Jenni Charles**

started things off with the mellow “One Foot in the Gutter,” followed by vocalist/guitarist **Jesse Dunn**’s new tune “Bootleg Jack,” off the recently released *Dirt Nap* EP. The stomper “Cabin Fever” brought the first dancers to the floor, and Charles’ fiddle lines glided through the song’s swampy breakdown like a riverboat full of whiskey. DWC have always been known for their onstage communication, but it’s evident that each member has improved their chops through recent tours.

A quick cover of Gillian Welch’s “Caleb Meyer” preceded “Find Your Home,” off the band’s latest full-length, and bassist **Dave Lockhart** showed that he might have the best voice in the band with the edgy “I Shot Him.” Lead guitarist **Bryan Daines** showed no fear on “Walkin’ Shoes,” making



extravagant flurries of chicken pickin’ seem effortless. While Dunn may have taken more solos in the past, Daines’ guitar playing seems to speak enough for the both of them. They offered “Walkin’ Shoes” into Neil Young’s “Hey Hey My My” and back again before taking their first break of the night.

The second set started with a slower rendition of the typically dynamic “Elijah,” followed by a more upbeat “Forty Four.” Soon, more people started to

make their way through the door and as the audience picked up, so did the band—notably on a Merle Haggard mash-up and the freshly released heavy hitter “Long Arm of the Law.” “Hip Hop Happy Hour” segued into a surprisingly funky cover of Ice Cube’s “It Was a Good Day” that set up drummer **Brian Huston** for a solo executed with enough finesse and attention to the beat that the crowd clapped along for its entirety. **Jed Nussbaum**

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