

JAZZ

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Hot Club of Detroit

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(Mack Avenue)

Gypsy jazz has a new home, not on the banks of the Seine, but on the Detroit River. As the name suggests, this Hot Club was inspired by the famed Paris-based groups of gypsy jazz-guitar legend Django



Reinhardt. The eponymous debut kicks off with a rousing version of "Belleville" and features five other Reinhardt compositions, from the classic "Nuages" to one of his later winsome works, "Troublant Bolero."

Several other tunes — Wes Montgomery's "Leila," Antonio Carlos Jobim's "How Insensitive," and an 11-minute romp through Nino Rota's "Godfather Theme" — come from less likely sources, but clever arrangements transport them easily and comfortably back to the City of Light. Hot Club was the dream of lead guitarist Evan Perri, who gathered together a group of hometown players and schooled them in the hot jazz sound. The lineup is reminiscent of Django's own, with clarinet (which Reinhardt used in place of violin in the later Nouveau Quintet) and accordion (from the bal-musette music that influenced Reinhardt early on) sharing the spotlight with Perri's own lead guitar.

Added to the drummer-less sextet are the de rigueur bass and dual rhythm guitars that propel the music ever forward. Hot Club of Detroit joins a growing number of musicians and bands harkening back to the gypsy jazz sound. Better than some and as good as the best, they recreate the style without merely rehashing it.

— Chris Heim