

NEWS



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LE JAZZ HOT IN SUNNYVALE FEBRUARY 11

Acclaimed quartet performs Gypsy jazz à la Django Reinhardt

SUNNYVALE, Calif. – Le Jazz Hot, the quartet version of internationally recognized Le Hot Club of San Francisco, will perform a Valentine’s weekend concert of Django Reinhardt-style Gypsy jazz at Sunnyvale Theatre on Saturday, February 11, at 8 p.m.

Patterned after Reinhardt’s famed Hot Club de France, the group’s style recalls the distinctive style of music popular in Paris from the 1930s through the 1950s with lightening-fast swing guitar. Le Jazz Hot band leader Paul Mehling has been called the “godfather of gypsy jazz in the U.S.” and credited with fueling a resurgence of interest in the genre.

Mehling grew up locally in Santa Clara, listening to his father’s swing band record collection and his older sister’s Beatles albums. He fell in love with Django Reinhardt’s music as a child. As a teen, Mehling taught himself to play by studying the playing style of Dan Hicks & His Hot Licks. When he graduated from high school, Mehling landed his

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first professional gig with Santa Cruz Dixieland band Jake Stock and the Abalone Stompers. He performed with the Stompers for the next 15 years, and also with the Santa Cruz Symphony and Magnolia Jazz Band. After an inspiring European vacation, Mehling packed up and moved to Paris, where he worked as a street musician and learned techniques from real Gypsies for two years before returning to the Bay Area to launch a revival of jazz manouche with his now-famous Hot Club of San Francisco.

Jazz violinist Evan Price joined the Hot Club in 1998. Price is a 10-year veteran of the world-renowned Turtle Island Quartet and recorded on five of their CDs, including their 2006 and 2008 Grammy winners. Price has won fiddling titles including U.S. Scottish Fiddling Champion, Canadian Junior Fiddle Champion and Canadian Novelty Fiddling Champion. He studied at both the Cleveland Institute of Music and Berklee College of Music and served on the music faculty at Wellesley College. Also an accomplished composer, he has written original work for both Hot Club of San Francisco and Turtle Island Quartet, and groups including Quartet San Francisco, Orchestra Nashville, San Francisco Girls' Chorus and the New Century Chamber Orchestra.

Versatile New Orleans horn player Clint Baker plays trombone, trumpet, clarinet and sax for the Hot Club. He has had his own band, Clint Baker's New Orleans Jazz Band, since age 14, and has played as an "axe for hire" with many other bands, including Hal Smith's Rhythm Makers and Roadrunners and Jim Cullen's Jazz Band. He is a jazz educator and jazz historian, married to KCSM jazz morning co-host Alisa Clancy.

Native French singer and guitarist Isabelle Fontaine grew up listening to Edith Piaf, Charles Trenet and Yves Montand, France's famous singers Django's era. Although Fontaine initially sang with friends just for fun and had no intention of making a career of it, she found herself touring as a singer throughout France, Spain and Switzerland for the next 20 years. Fontaine moved to the U.S. in 2004.

Le Hot Club will release its 13th album, a live recording, later this spring.

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The intimate Sunnyvale Theatre is located at the Community Center, 550 E. Remington Drive, between El Camino Real and Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road. General admission tickets are \$28. Discount tickets for students and seniors are \$22. Single Subscriptions start at \$80. All Evenings of Cultural Arts programs are Saturdays at 8 p.m. Group discounts are available. For tickets, please phone the Sunnyvale Theatre Box Office at (408) 733-6611. The Box Office is open Monday – Friday, 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., and two hours prior to shows. For additional information, call the Sunnyvale Theatre Administrative Office at (408) 730-7725, TDD (408) 730-7501, or visit *Arts.inSunnyvale.com* on the Web.

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