



BY VANESSA SALVIA

Gypsies Swingin' Into Town

Your Hot Club Sandwich gets fresh and tasty.

Gypsy jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt has inspired countless bands over the years. One of the most vibrant and promising of those bands comes from our northern neighbor, Seattle. I spoke with Vince Brown, the guitarist and banjoist of Hot

HOT CLUB SANDWICH
Saturday, 9pm
Sam Bond's, \$7

Club Sandwich (HCS), to find out how the band has updated the Reinhardt style. Brown said that Reinhardt's music was a contemporaneous re-interpretation of American swing and jazz, which was popular here in the '30s and '40s.

Reinhardt and Stephane Grapelli's quintet popularized acoustic, string-based (guitar, bass, violin) jazz at the Hot Club of France decades ago. Brown said, "It's a unique small-combo

sound that we now try to emulate, and to build on that, we've added mandolin to the mix." He called it "string swing," and it's in keeping with the old-world elements Reinhardt introduced and the unbridled energy of American swing.

HCS perform traditional Reinhardt-Grapelli compositions along with string-based Brazilian music, and originals that are "within the tradition" of gypsy swing. "Gypsy swing is alive and well and still actually played a lot in Europe. To a certain extent it occupies the space that perhaps bluegrass does here. It hasn't remained stagnant," Brown said.

The introduction of Latin rhythms complements the modern gypsy jazz traditions that are

celebrated in Europe and gives the music even more of a continental flair. Though singing is not a part of traditional gypsy swing, the band embraces vocal tunes. "We try to mix it up," Brown said. Eugene is a favorite because the band draws an effervescent swing-dancing crowd.

Brown said they're currently recording a follow-up to 2003's *Digga Digga Do*, slated for a Spring 2005 release. The band records with three guitar players but only two will join the tour. The lineup will be Brown with Kevin Connor on guitar, James Schneider on bass and banjo, Matt Sircely on mandolin and Tim Wetmuller on violin.

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Prepping for the Short Tour

Jerry Joseph & the Jackmormons return.

Friday's show at John Henry's will be the second time Jerry Joseph and the Jackmormons have played together since April. So it's really more like a live rehearsal for their upcoming mini-tour and three nights of shows in Costa Rica over New Year's.

Junior Ruppel, the band's bass player, told me that life in the Jackmormons' camp has been slow this year, since Joseph was busy supporting his solo release, *Cherry*, and touring with band Stockholm Syndrome. "It was kind of nice. We just kind of took the year off. We're just getting our momentum up again."

JERRY JOSEPH AND THE JACKMORMONS, THE DAMNWELLS
Fri. 9 pm
John Henry's, \$8

Ruppel himself released a CD of DJ dance music called *El Fabuloso*. He and a friend began that project in Butte, Mont. (released in May) but Ruppel finished it alone in early 2004.

"It's a little different than what the Jackmormons do! A lot of time spent on my computer smoking pot, basically!" he said with a laugh. "I approach music from just about every angle at this point." After New Year's and a short break, the band will commence a three-week Rocky Mountain tour in February and March. Beyond that, they plan to "just keep working," though not as hard, since "We are getting a little older these days!"

The band's most recent release is the 2003 double-CD live recording *Mouthful of Copper* recorded in Butte. Ruppel and Joseph

have begun writing songs together and are talking about recording again but have made no firm plans. About the next record, Ruppel said, "We've been talking a lot about it. We're probably going to try something new. We've talked about maybe working with loops or some electronic stuff, trying some new things." The Damnells, featuring Whiskeytown's Steven Terry, will also perform.

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