

REVIEWS Guitartistry

By David R. Adler

HOT CLUB OF DETROIT

Hot Club of Detroit (Mack Avenue)



Thanks in part to the jaw-dropping work of Biréli Lagrène, there has been a renewal of interest in gypsy jazz, with "hot clubs" springing up in various cities. Hot Club of Detroit, led by the young guitarist Evan Perri, certainly has a handle on the Django Reinhardt sound. The group draws heavily on Reinhardt repertoire for its impressive self-titled debut. Perri is joined by rhythm guitarists Colton Weatherston and Paul Brady, bassist Shannon Wade, clarinetist Dave Bennett and chromatic button-accordionist Julien Labro. With no violinist, the band eschews mimicry of the original Quintette du Hot Club de France as it takes on the Reinhardt gems "Belleville," "Stompin' at Decca," "Tears," "Nuages," "Troublant Bolero" and "Anouman." There's also an 11-minute workout on Nino Rota's "Godfather Theme" as well as treatments of Wes Montgomery's "Leila" and Jobim's "How Insensitive." Perri's original "Swing One" adds some uptempo spice. His arrangements bring out the tantalizing contrasts in Django's music: light and dark, fast and slow, burning and lyrical. His lead acoustic guitar is virtuosic, blending vintage flavor with bebop flair.