



Residency Activities

Please note that residency fees may vary.

Lecture/Demonstration

Gypsy-Swing 101

A lecture/demonstration on Paris' most original musical legacy

Audience: any

Number of participants: minimum 15 – maximum 100

Length: 60 minutes up to 120

Requirements: 4 (four) Chairs

1 (one) Microphone (to be plugged into guitar amp)*

1 (one) guitar amp*

An assortment of water and sodas

*- for groups of 20 or more

Join The Hot Club of San Francisco director Paul Mehling in a visit to the smoky cabarets of Paris for an introduction to the Gypsy swing genre. Django Reinhardt, an illiterate nomad with a handicapped left hand, was an undisputed musical genius. In spite of being from an unwelcome level of society and his choice of the then hugely un-popular guitar, he and partner Stephane Grappelli (violin) changed the history of jazz forever. They created an all-string chamber group, which confounded jazz-lovers the world over by demonstrating that you don't have to be American to play jazz! The Gypsy-Swing story is part mystery, part bravado, part genius, and several parts World War II.

Through a combination of lecture and live musical performance, the audience will become acquainted with Django Reinhardt's intriguing persona. Paul will chart the development of Gypsy swing by providing a historical context. He will address the plight of the gypsies, racial barriers in the jazz world, how Gypsy swing differed from American jazz, the role of guitars and stringed instruments in jazz, competition between Reinhardt and Grappelli, and introduce some of Reinhardt's contemporaries (such as Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Oscar Alleman, Baro Matelo and Sarane, Gusti Malla). This discussion concludes with a look at the Gypsy-Swing players of today (such as Jimmy Rosenberg, Romane, Angelo Debarre, and Pearl Django) and the genre's continuing influence on modern music, movies and television.

Gypsy-Swing for Young Audiences

Audience: grades K-12

Number of participants: minimum 20 – flexible with max.

Length: 15, 30 or 60 minutes according to age group

Requirements: 4 (four) Chairs

1 (one) Microphone (to be plugged into guitar amp)*

1 (one) guitar amp*

An assortment of water and sodas

*- for groups of 20 or more

Gypsy people have always functioned as human tape-recorders, carrying music from village to village, often delivering it with their own stamp placed gently upon it. Across continents and throughout time, this cross-pollination of different styles, sounds and tempos is the driving force that keeps music evolving. This concert for young audiences will explore the original 'World' Music, played by modern day nomadic peoples of Europe, as well as many aficionados around the world. The infectious syncopation and nuttiness of 1930's swing-era music, mixed up with the mysterious and magical sounds of fingers flying on acoustic stringed instruments will conjure up visions of caravans and Parisian cafes in the impressionable minds of its young listeners.

Masterclass

Unlocking the Secrets of Gypsy Guitar Gypsy-Swing Master Class for guitarists

Audience: intermediate to advanced players of all ages

Number of participants: minimum 5 – maximum 100

Length: 60 minutes

Requirements: 1 (one) Chair

1 (one) Microphone (to be plugged into guitar amp)*

1 (one) guitar amp*

*- for groups of 20 or more

Ever wondered how gypsies get *that* sound? The loudness? The singing vibrato with endless sustain or the incredibly fast and precise attack to each note? This class is comprised of a lecture, demonstration and Q&A session. It will encompass everything from the swinging rhythm to the solo voice as defined by such players as Django Reinhardt, Stochelo Rosenberg, Fapy Lafertain, Romane, Angelo Debarre and others of Gypsy swing music. Paul Mehling, director of the Hot Club of San Francisco, has studied and played with many of the top Gypsy-Swing players from around the world. A highly-praised teacher, Paul is uniquely qualified to answer all the questions guitar students may have concerning the various technical challenges presented by this music. In addition to the technical 'hands-on' questions, Paul will explain the harmonic considerations that define the genre. This may include which notes to play, which notes to emphasize, how to deal with troublesome chord changes, melodic constructions, 'Gypsy' chords, ornamentation and the scales that create the magic and mystery of Gypsy Swing. After thoroughly exploring various questions concerning fingers, mind and spirit, Paul will lead the class in a directed Jam Session. This will allow attendees to immediately try out various musical ideas discussed and explained. Two or more tunes will be analyzed and then played by the group, allowing for comparison and review by all.

Workshop

Jazz Music? How to listen!

Audience: grades 5 through 12

Number of participants: minimum 20 – flexible with max.

Length: 20-90 minutes

Requirements: 4 (four) Chairs

1 (one) Microphone (to be plugged into guitar amp)*

1 (one) guitar amp*

An assortment of water and sodas

*- for groups of 20 or more

What music do you listen to and why do you like it? Why does music make us want to move our bodies? This interactive workshop, lead by director Paul Mehling, will explore several different topics related to music and sound. Paul will encourage discussion by asking varied questions, beginning broadly with "What is music? and "What is a Gypsy?", moving to "What do you think Gypsy-jazz music is?" This will flow into a live performance of Gypsy jazz musical examples. Depending on the age level, the workshop may include a discussion to explore the following topics: a history of the Gypsy jazz culture from Django Reinhardt to today, how to "follow" a jazz solo, how to improvise music in order to express yourself creatively (with audience participation), and the importance of practice in mastering a virtuosic performance style.

