

REVIEWS

“Van Django can deliver acoustic power chords with the lustrous tone of a classical string ensemble while staying fully stoked on the spirit of the Quintette of the Hot Club of France. This is highly recommended listening” **Michael Juk, Westcoast Music, CBC Radio**

"Van Django is a West Coast quartet of seriously talented string players — who just happen to not take anything very seriously — except making high energy, top-flight music. The approach is well-rooted in the tradition of the old Hot Club of France — point of departure being their gypsy-guitarist namesake — but beyond that it's all pure blue-skying: flights of dazzling fancy, astonishing technique, boundless creativity. They've taken the old smoky Parisian atmospherics and brought it out into the ocean-and-mountain sunshine and it simply delights. Van Django tosses off jaw-dropping technical licks with effortless ease, but above all, they entertain hugely, with every bar of every tune — tried and true or keenly original. If you're ready for some wide-grin musical imagination, here's a debut disc to build a party around. Don't forget the absinthe. Or the crantinis. Or the zinfandel." **Jurgen Gothe, DiscDrive, CBC Radio 2**

“Imagine, if you can, Stéphane Grappelli and Django Reinhardt returning from the grave to join a Deep Purple cover band gigging at a punk rock wedding and you might just get a whiff of the twisted miracle that is Van Django” **Michael Juk, Westcoast Music, CBC Radio**

"They have it all – musicianship, musicality, humor and that swingin' Django sound. Sit back , relax, and be transported to 1930's Paris” **Scott Wilson Jazz Yukon**

"Concertgoers felt they were just part of a friendly jam session Saturday night in Port Hardy. Jazz quartet Van Django gave the crowd an informal and fun musical history lesson on European jazz greats Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli. Much of the music had a gypsy feel, reflecting Reinhardt's Romany gypsy heritage. Django's Waltz particularly transported listeners to the firelight of a gypsy camp in France. Van Django also played a number of swing jazz tunes, including Gershwin's I've Got Rhythm and Sonny Rollins' Pent Up House, inviting the audience to dance if desired ... There is no denying the talent of these musicians ... ” **Teresa Bird, North Island Gazette**

"The Pacific Rim Summer Festival has a nice lineup of talent to see this month. Coming right up this Tuesday is Van Django, a quartet that plays gypsy jazz inspired by the legendary gypsy Frenchman, Django Reinhardt. Those who attended the marvelous Tango Paradiso concert last year will recognize that group's gifted guitarist, Budge Schachte, in this group. Django's style of music with the Hot Club of France continues to inspire musicians. Woody Allen's recent movie, Sweet And Lowdown, illustrated musicians in awe of Reinhardt whose career was at its peak during the '30s and '40s. As a young man, Django survived a fire in his caravan, but scarring left him with a badly damaged leg and two paralyzed fingers. He overcame the disability of his fretting hand by inventing an instrumental technique strictly his own. His international fame was built on his genius, blending jazz rhythms with traditional gypsy music. It's irresistible. When the organizers of the summer festival heard Van Django audition they said, "Gotta have them!" And you've gotta see them." **Shirley Langer, Entertainment Column, West Coast Showbiz**

"...the evening's entertainment was polished, energetic and thoroughly enjoyable. The quartet was well prepared musically and presented informative, light-hearted and entertaining introductions to their songs and the to song's composer and history. The local Burns Lake audience was appreciative and enthusiastic during and after the evening, and we are still getting positive comments on the street two weeks after the event. Budge, Cameron and crew were VERY generous with their time and attention to [the high school students who attended the concert], sitting down to show them guitar riffs and 'talk musical shop' for over half an hour after everyone else had gone home. Van Django also took time, before the concert, to have a look at, ask questions about and comment on a display of high school students' art work that was just outside the main doors of the hall! We were VERY impressed with them as musicians but also as people - good guys who play very good music, and we wish them every success."

John Barth, Lakes District Arts Council