



Photo : Emile Savitry, courtesy Sophie Malexis

# Django Reinhardt, Paris swing

**Multimedia exhibition organised by the Cité de la musique, Paris  
Available from November 2012**



**cit  de la musique  
PARIS**

Following the success of the multimedia exhibition "Chopin in Paris, the composer's studio" in 2010 and of "Brassens or freedom" in 2011, the Cité de la musique is looking to extend its multimedia exhibition proposal, streamlined in both cost and implementation.

In 2012, the Cité de la musique will be shining the spotlight on Django Reinhardt in the exhibition "Django Reinhardt, Paris swing" showing in Paris from 6 October 2012 to 23 January 2013.

The multimedia version will be available from mid-November 2012.

## Django Reinhardt, Paris swing

*"All the miraculous poetry surrounding the child thieves, fortune-tellers and the dreaming white horse tied up on a roadside, escorted you on your departure. Transforming a painted caravan into a sports car is not the least of your talents. Now, you have become one with your heavenly guitar riffs and brass ensembles. Your rhythm has shaken the universal malaise to the core. And if we survive to the last era, we shall perhaps hear your orchestra compose an arrangement to the trumpets of the Apocalypse."*

Jean Cocteau

*"I think that Django Reinhardt's music would appeal to anyone, from the intellectual to the taxi driver. The beauty of his music is so immediately perceptible."*

Woody Allen, filmmaker

*"He is the Holy Spirit. Django is the greatest improviser of all times. He has composed heavenly music, like Bach or Chopin. In his hands, even the wrong notes are amazing."*

Thomas Dutronc, guitarist and singer



Jean Cocteau, Portrait of Django Reinhardt, c. 1937. © ADAGP, Paris, 2012

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## I. Django Reinhardt: a special relationship with the Cité de la musique

When in 1964, "Naguine", Django's widow, decided to donate an instrument, one of his famous Selmer guitars, to what was then called the Musée instrumental at the Paris Conservatoire, she marked a break with the well-established sombre Manouche tradition according to which all the personal items of a deceased person are burned. By making a donation to a public collection, she gave the instrument an additional, yet equally cultural, value. Not only an object of veneration, but also one of study, it now stands as a testament in the eyes of the public to a music culture that is still alive to this day. Stéphane Grappelli similarly made a donation of the Hel violin belonging to Michel Warlop. This tremendous gesture has made it possible for our museum to recapture the greatest hours of the Hot Club de France Quintet.

The exhibition concept can therefore be traced back to this founding gesture. It proposes the first complete insight into the life of this astonishing musician and the ties that united him with the ever-concentric circles of communities that formed with his French Manouche "cousins"; then his fellow musicians, the great figures of American jazz, who soon considered him one of their own; and finally, the whole of between-the-wars Paris and of the darker world of Occupied Paris, a time during which Django enjoyed an unparalleled reputation, and no doubt also a certain amount of protection, while refusing invitations to play in Germany and seeking, without success, to flee France.



The Selmer guitar, aka the "small mouth" once having belonged to Django Reinhardt, 1940 © Musée de la musique collection/photo by Jean-Marc Anglès

## II . The “Django Reinhardt, Paris swing” exhibition at the Cité de la musique, Paris

Organised in the form of a chronological circuit, the exhibition reconstructs the unique social and artistic path trodden by Django Reinhardt. It evokes the sound of an era: artistic Paris in the 30s and 40s under the influence of jazz.

The exhibition curator:

Born in Toulouse in 1974, **Vincent Bessières** is holder of a higher degree in modern French language and literature. He was curator for the “We Want Miles” exhibition, aka “Miles Davis; le jazz face à sa légende” staged at the Cité de la musique (autumn 2009), and resumed at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal (spring 2010), then in Brazil, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo (summer-autumn 2011). As a journalist, he worked as deputy editor-in-chief on the magazine Jazzman, was a commentator on France Musique and currently works for Jazz News. He was also associate artistic advisor for the short musical programme Studio 5, broadcast on France 5. For the Pedagogical department of the Cité de la musique, he was tasked with the conception and editorial co-ordination of jazz-related content featured on the portal of the new Multimedia library where he has run a contemporary jazz collegium since 2006. In 2011, he produced a special feature issue for L'Express magazine entitled “A century of jazz”.

### Associate exhibition curators

**Joël Dugot**, curator at the Musée de la musique

**Pascal Cordereix**, curator at the audiovisual department of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF)

**For full details on the exhibition, please visit our mini-site:  
[www.citedelamusique.fr/django](http://www.citedelamusique.fr/django)**



Cité de la musique



### III . The multimedia version of the exhibition

#### Exhibition circuit

The exhibition will comprise 7 chronological sequences that trace the artistic and personal milestones and achievements of Django Reinhardt (1910-1953).



#### A Gypsy childhood: from the road to La Zone (1910-1924)

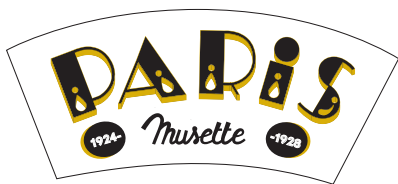
Born into a family of Manouche gypsies, Django Reinhardt has a childhood marked by an itinerant lifestyle. At the end of the First World War, he begins his musical apprenticeship with a family of artists, starting on the violin before adopting the banjo as his instrument. Barely a teenager, he begins busking in the streets of Paris.



1. Le Petit Journal magazine, engraving "Transit camps, a census of gypsies in France", illustrated supplement, no.233, Sunday 5 May 1895, private collection © DR.



2. Django Reinhardt as a child with members of his family, c. 1920, BNF © DR



#### Paris musette (1924-1928)

The musical talents of the young Django earn him the attention of several accordionists and he plays in the *bals musette* East of Paris and other guinguettes where he makes a name for himself.



1. Django Reinhardt on the banjo, c. 1925, private collection © DR.



2. Score for "Minuit java", by A. Bosc. Illustrated by Clérice, 1925, private collection © DR.

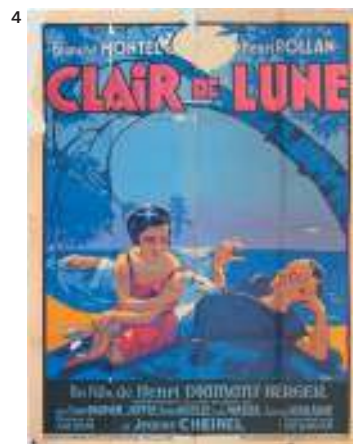


3. Generic dance token "Valid for 1 dance", c. 1925, private collection © DR. 4. 'Montagne Sainte-Geneviève' dance token, c. 1925, private collection © DR. 5. 'Bal dancing des Fleurs' dance token, c. 1925, private collection © DR.



**Java to Jazz through song (1928-1933)**

After a painful convalescence and despite his disability, Django Reinhardt develops a highly original technique and absolutely stunning virtuosity, which, by dint of various encounters, allows him to discover a repertoire of new sounds and rhythms.



1. Poster for "Dix-neuf ans" at Danou theatre with Jean Sablon, start of Columbia discs, 1933, private collection © DR. 2. Poster for "Dix-neuf ans" at Danou theatre, Paris, 1933, private collection © DR. 3. Guérino orchestra at the Boite à Matelots: Pierre Ferret (guitar), Lucien Galopain (guitar), Sylvio Schmidt (violin), Guerino (accordion), Christian Fauré (double bass),

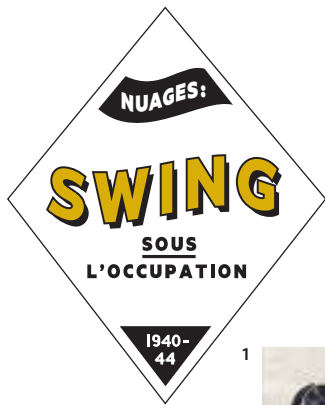


**Hot jazz! (1934-1939)**

In 1934, Django makes the acquaintance of the violinist, Stéphane Grappelli; encouraged and financed by the Hot Club de France, an association dedicated to the promotion of traditional jazz, together they found the Hot Club de France Quintet, exclusively comprised of stringed instruments, and recognised by Louis Armstrong and Coleman Hawkins.



1. Selmer guitar, aka "small mouth" having once belonged to Django Reinhardt, 1940 © Musée de la musique collection/photo by Jean-Marc Anglès. 2. Mini-poster for Louis Armstrong concerts in the Salle Rameau (formerly Pleyel) on 9 and 10 November 1934, private collection © DR. 3. Hot Club de France Quintet, England tour, 1938, private collection © DR.



### Nuages: Swing under the Occupation (1940-1944)

When war breaks out, the Quintet is in London, and Django returns to France alone; he goes on to form a "New Quintet" with Hubert Rostaing's clarinet in place of the violin. Swing helps the youth to forget the harsh realities of war; Django's thoughts turn to his fellow internees and he dreams of composing a mass for them, but has to wait for the Liberation while keeping a low profile in Pigalle.



1. Poster for "Django Reinhardt, Disques Swing", 1941, BNF © DR.3. "Jazz Band (Dirty Style Blues)", 1944, by Jean Dubuffet, CNAM Centre Pompidou © ADAGP, Paris 2012. 2. Score for "Nuages" (Clouds) by Lucienne Delyle, music by Django Reinhardt, lyrics by Jacques Larue, Publications Francis Day, 1942, private collection © DR. 3. Gérard Léveque writing from Django Reinhardt's dictation, c. 1944, private collection © DR.



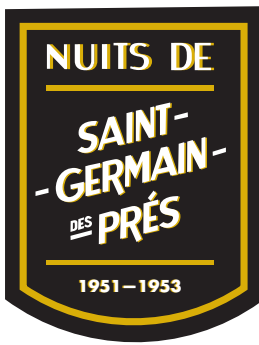
### American Dreams (1944-1950)

Django teams up again with the American jazzmen after the Liberation. Duke Ellington invites him to take part in a tour as soloist with his orchestra, which is travelling around the main cities in the US. He uses an electric guitar, which he adopts on his return to France. However, torn between the idea of reuniting with Stéphane Grapelli and his desire for change, he ends up living in a caravan once more.



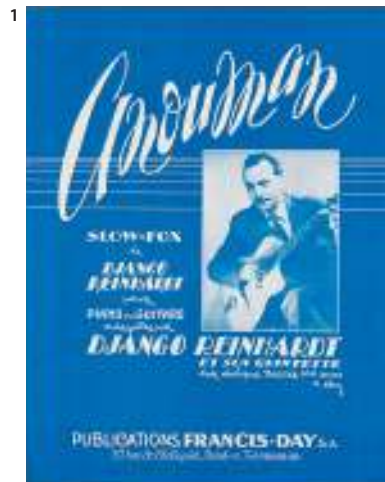
1. Duke Ellington and Django Reinhardt, Aquarium, New York, 1946, photo by William P. Gottlieb, Library of Congress collection, public domain. 2. Cover of Down Beat magazine dated 18 November 1946, private collection © DR. 5. 78 RPM album "Hot Jazz, The Hot Club de France Quintet", RCA Victor "Hot Jazz Series", vol. VI, 1945, private collection © DR.





### Nights of Saint-Germain-des-Prés (1951-1953)

In 1951, after several months' absence, Django rediscovers his taste for music thanks to a group of bebop lovers; he discovers an inspiration that opens up new horizons. The American impresario, Norman Granz, is keen to include him in the tours he is organising and asks him to make a recording. However, Django dies prematurely of a brain haemorrhage on 16 May 1953 in Samois-sur-Seine.



1. Score for "Anouman", slow fox-trot by Django Reinhardt, Publications Francis Day, 1953, private collection © DR. 5. Dizzy Gillespie and Django Reinhardt, Brussels, March 1953, private collection © DR.

## IV . Content of multimedia version of exhibition

Devised to be adaptable to all types of exhibition space of **under 50 m<sup>2</sup>**, with no particular security or conservation requirements, it offers the host institution a high degree of flexibility for hanging works.

### The multimedia exhibition proposed herein is divided into three key components:

■ **No.1:** nine panels for printing, illustrated with photos, documents and texts

■ **No.2:** an interactive interface showing a series of video, audio and graphic documents, consultable on a computer workstation. A mouse is used for browsing and headphones for listening.

➤➤➤ **AVAILABLE IN FRENCH/ENGLISH AND FRENCH/SPANISH**

■ **No.3:** An application dedicated to children aged between 6 and 12: "Django's journey". This interactive circuit invites children to follow in the footsteps of this extraordinary musician. Children will learn all about the life and music of Django Reinhardt in 8 episodes. Each stage features a game that players must successfully complete in order to continue the circuit.

➤➤➤ **AVAILABLE IN FRENCH ONLY**

**There is a possibility of modifying one of the three languages on offer (an additional charge will be made)**



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## V . Technical and practical data pertaining to multimedia version of the exhibition

### The Cité de la musique is tasked with:

- **Composing the letter of agreement for the sale of the exhibition**
- **Supplying the technical data sheets for the printing and installation of content**
- **Providing the FTP server address for the download of content comprising:**
  - \* graphic mock-ups in HD of print-ready panels - medium to be chosen by the host site
  - \* multimedia interface to be installed on one or more computers for consultation purposes
  - \* children's software program to be installed on one or more computers for consultation purposes
- **Providing Cité teams to assist with installation**
- **Supplying images and logos for site communication purposes**
- **Paying reproduction rights on works**

### The host site is tasked with:

- **Supplying the computing equipment: computers and headphones**
- **Covering the cost of printing up panels from the graphic mock-ups provided (panels approx. 80 x 100 cm)**
- **Making the necessary declarations regarding royalties for the dissemination of music to local collection bodies (SACEM) - based on list provided by the Cité de la musique.**
- **Submitting to the Cité de la musique the layout plan and communication documents prior to printing**
- **Covering the costs of graphic and multimedia integration in the appropriate language (in case of translation of panel texts and interface in a language other than French, English, or Spanish).**

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## VI . Publications to accompany the exhibition

### *Django Reinhardt, Paris swing*



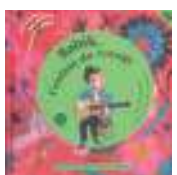
A catalogue written by Michael Dregni, an American authority on Django Reinhardt, will be published by Les Editions Textuel. 224 pp. Four-colour process. Format 27 x 19.5 cm. €39.

### *Exhibition soundtrack*



An 80-minute CD (CD-DIGIPAK - ref. CMJ 2742227) and a 5-CD collector's box, together with an illustrated booklet and a poster (5 CD - SPECIAL BOX ref. CMJ 5742230.34) will be produced especially to accompany the exhibition. Published by Le Chant du Monde - Harmonia Mundi.

### *Babik, the vagabond child*



A CD-book containing a tale by Anne Montange and a special dossier on Django Reinhardt. Les petits contes du Musée de la musique collection. Cité de la musique/Actes Sud junior co-publication. €15.

The above publications are available to order from <http://www.citedelamusique.fr/boutique>.

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## **VII . Cost of the multimedia exhibition**

The cost of the exhibition is **€1,700** ex. VAT ( 100 per additional location from 1 to 5 locations)  
Cost of integrating a new language (Latin-based) for panels: €400  
Cost of integrating a new language (Latin-based) for interface: €400

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## **VIII . Availability of multimedia exhibition**

The exhibition will be available from **mid-November 2012**.  
Applications may be made as of 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**N. B.** The exhibition is also available in its in-extenso version, as presented to the Cité de la musique.  
A presentation kit (scenography, financial and technical data) is available on application.

### **Contacts at the Cité de la musique, Paris**

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