

LE CHAT LUNATIQUE

Filthy, Mangy Jazz

Press Kit / Revue de Presse

Le Chat Lunatique is a professional group of four well-dressed, handsome young men who play a combination of Gypsy Swing, Western Swing and anything else that they damn well please! Filthy Mangy Jazz is their forte!



Photo by Wes Naman

About the band: Bio and Influences...

As unpredictable, fearless, and entertaining as their namesake, Le Chat Lunatique purveys an addictive genre they call “filthy, mangy jazz,” a signature sound that makes you want to smoke and drink too much—if only you could get off the dance floor. Le jazz hot of Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli is their north star, but they use that beacon to navigate through a wide range of genres, blending Western swing, classical, reggae, doowop, and “anything else we damn well please” into strikingly original compositions and audaciously reworked standards alike.

Le Chat Lunatique who have not changed their line-up since their formation 6 years ago, is Muni Kulasinghe’s theatrical vocals, his violin skittering across the music like beads of water on a hot skillet—inspired as much by a legless Polish gypsy he encountered on his vagabond travels as by the great Grappelli. It’s the axe of guitarist John Sandlin, the classicist who fell under the sway of Reinhardt, felling bar after bar of music with ferocious dexterity. It’s the slap-happy bass and slyly sweet vocals of Jared Putnam, the sinisterly innocent one whose dark past embraces both death metal and Western swing. It’s the irresistibly deep-pocketed grooves of drummer Fernando Garavito, the mysterious and gracious Colombian who appeared by magic in New Mexico.

www.lechatlunatique.com

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Le-Chat-Lunatique/127347245619>

<http://www.myspace.com/lechatlunatiqueband>

Accomplishments Awards and Accolades

Major Shows and Tours:

- 2012: *Up coming* East Coast tour including Bard College and Barbes in Brooklyn NY
- 2012: Sold out show at the Rio Grande Theatre in Las Cruces, NM
- 2011: 23 International Jazz Festival, Bogota, Colombia
- 2011: New Mexico Jazz Festival, Albuquerque
- 2011: de Young Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, CA
- 2010: New Mexico Jazz Festival, Albuquerque
- 2010: South by Southwest (SXSW) Showcase at the Elephant Room Austin TX
- 2009: Tucson Film and Music Festival Hotel Congress Tucson, AZ
- 2009: New Mexico Jazz Festival, Albuquerque
- 2009: European Tour- 2 weeks in Serbia, one in England. Performance of "Flamingo/Winnebago" at the National Theater, Novi Sad, Serbia
- 2009: Le Petit Carnaval at the Fox Theater, Tucson, AZ
- 2008: Djangofest Colorado, Crested Butte, CO
- 2008: New Mexico Jazz Festival, Albuquerque
- 2008: Glendale Community College, Glendale, AZ
- 2007: Summerfest, Opening for Cracker, Albuquerque, NM
- 2007: Albuquerque Folk Festival, Main Stage, Albuquerque, NM
- 2007: Painted Bride Theater, Premiere of "Flamingo/Winnebago", Philadelphia, PA
- 2007: Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO

Awards:

Weekly Alibi-

"Best of Burque": Best Band: 2008
Best Jazz Act: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Best Avant-Garde: 3rd place, 2010

Local iQ-

"Smart List": Best Band: 2008, 2009, 2010
Best Jazz Act: 2008, 2009, 2010

Albuquerque the Magazine-

"Best of the City" : Best Jazz Act: 2009
Best Band Headed for Stardom: 2008
Editors's Pick: 2007

2008, Won Best Jazz Song- "Miss Lady" and was nominated for SEVEN New Mexico Music Awards

2007 Winner New Mexico Talent Showcase in the Jazz blues/gospel division

Have Opened for:

Asleep at the Wheel, The Hot Club of San Francisco, The Djangomatics, The Red Elvises, Del Castillo, Marianne Dissard, John Jorgensen, Robin Nolan, Gonzalo Bergara, Stephane Wrembel, Cracker, Thrift Store Cowboys, Marco Benevento and The Dirty Dozen Brass Band.

Other Highlights:

They composed and performed the music for a play called **Flamingo/Winnebago** which has been performed in Colorado Springs, CO, at *The Philly Fringe Festival* in Philadelphia, PA, *The Sterijino Pozorje Festival* in Novi Sad, Serbia and *The Tricklock Revolutions International Festival* in Albuquerque, NM.

In 2007, 2008 and 2010 John Sandlin, who is endorsed by Manousch Guitars, organized the 2nd, 3rd and 4th **Annual New Mexico Django Festivals** which were met with great acclaim, and brought great artists such as Howard Alden, Stephane Wrembel and Gonzalo Bergara to Albuquerque.

Our two albums:

Le Chat Lunatique
Demonic Lovely (original compositions)

Le Chat Lunatique
Under the covers (covers)



PRESS AND GREAT ARTICLES

PRESS AND NOTABLE ARTICLES

Le Chat Lunatique holds 'Demonic Lovely' music video debut



Le Chat Lunatique

Award-winning local gypsy jazz purveyors Le Chat Lunatique will bring its signature jazz rhythms and fiery lyrics to Low Spirits on January 20 to celebrate the release of a new music video for the song, "Demonic Lovely."

The video, a first for the quartet, was crafted by international filmmaker Marie-Michele Jasmin-Belisle (8h51.com) and features the band, which includes Muni Kulasinghe, Fernando Garavito, John Sandlin and Jared Putnam, trekking through the New Mexico desert, instruments in hand. Tickets for the video screening cost an apt \$6.66. Along with live performances by Le Chat Lunatique, DJ Limn and Felix y los Gatos, the evening will have a 1940s theme complete with cocktails, dancing and a contest for best costume. It promises to be an evening of delightfully demonic fun, high-paced dancing and throwback cool entertainment.

SCREENING/CONCERT

Le Chat Lunatique

WITH DJ LIMN AND FELIX Y LOS GATOS

9p, Fri., Jan. 20

Low Spirits, 2823 and NW

\$6.66

lechatlunatique.com
lowspiritslva.com

LOCAL IQ | ALBUQUERQUE'S INTELLIGENT ALTERNATIVE | JANUARY 12-25, 2012 15

Arts & Entertainment, Las Cruces, New Mexico January 13, 2012

Le Chat Lunatique: Qu'est-ce que c'est?

Band's music brings to mind a different era

Review by Richard Coltharp
Las Cruces Online

A great concert can take you outside your day-to-day routine. A Le Chat Lunatique concert can transport you to another place and time. What place and time?

Well, the time is a little easier to pin down than the place. Listening to their music puts you somewhere between 1944 and 1955. Regarding place, your time impressions, guided by their French name, is you've been taken to a café in Paris. The 1950s and '40s "hot jazz" pioneers guitarist Django Reinhardt and violinist Stéphane Grappelli, who played Paris and elsewhere in Europe, indeed come through the instruments of Le Chat

Lunatique when they're on stage. Hot jazz is so foreign to the modern music listener that it alone guarantees a fresh experience. Le Chat Lunatique, which prefers to call its music "fifties, mangy jazz."

The Albuquerque-based foursome hits Las Cruces Saturday, Jan. 14, with a 7 p.m. concert at the Rio Grande Theater, 211 N. Main St.

The group consists of Muni Kulasinghe, violin; John Sandlin, guitar and lap steel guitar; Jared Putnam, bass; and Fernando Garavito, drums. All four sing, and the combinations are relentlessly

delightful. The Rio Grande is a perfect venue for this group, but like the band itself, it reveals a time gone by. Here their chaotic and joyful live fit the stage at the Rio Grande. You'll



Albuquerque-based Le Chat Lunatique will bring their "fifties, mangy jazz" sound to the Rio Grande Theater Saturday, Jan. 14.

hear impressively musical instrumentals, and creative, poetic and hilarious lyrics. And, of course, you'll hear hot jazz.

However, this quartet is too restless to stick purely to just one style.

Garavito, from Colombia, brings a whole lot of Latin rhythm to his percussion. Jared Putnam has a groove that includes both death metal and bluesy swing.

And to those concerned in the audience off, they'll do something the band can't do: the three song of Spinal Tap.

The band's name, French for "crazy cat," is fitting for many reasons, including that it ends in que, just like those words that all apply, more or less, to the group: unique, bizarre, strange, infectious, passionate, energetic, chaotic and Albuquerque.

Tickets for the concert are \$10 and \$12. For more information, visit www.riograndetheater.com or www.lechatlunatique.com.

Poster for 23rd International Jazz Festival, Bogota, Colombia, September 2011



MUSIC TO YOUR EARS
by KESSICA CASEY/DARR

Le Chat Lunatique Unveils Nouveau Vintage Video

For filmmaker Marie-Michele Jasmin-Belisle, the project had to be a live screening of film, or the usual disc or DVD or video format. An director of Albuquerque's gypsy jazz quartet Le Chat Lunatique's first official video, the

More real-time and part-time a Marie-Michele's recent entered a familiar territory. The video was the result of a very planned scenario. It "involved a meticulous amount of logistics," Jasmin-Belisle says via e-mail.

Years in the making, the concept for the locally shot "Demonic Lovely" video came to Jasmin-Belisle after she auditioned by artist Doug Sandlin as a black-and-white actor who, with the help of a few friends, picks off members of the band. In keeping with Le Chat's aesthetic, he story-lined scenes of action—see all flow up in 2040s style.

"I must say that our production meetings were always pretty damn funny, and that we had the fun of our lives shooting it—although Jared, who hates being hit over through the desert, may not agree with the severity of that statement," the director says.

See the premiere of the "Demonic Lovely" video at Low Spirits—saving parts of it on YouTube on Friday. The evening will include a live screening of the video, as well as a DJ set by Limn and DJ Limn, and behind-the-scenes footage and a live performance by the band. The video will post to the web on Saturday, Jan. 21.

Le Chat Lunatique video release party
with Felix y los Gatos, DJ David and DJ Limn

FRIDAY, JAN. 20, 9 P.M.

Low Spirits
2823 Second Street NW
Tickets \$6.66, 20
lechatlunatique.com
lechatlunatique.com

Comment on this article at alibi.com

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► TROUBADOUR

Coca Leaves, Vinyl and Confiscated Mustache Scissors ...

Le Chat Lunatique goes to Colombia

BY MEL WINTER

The mountains are to the east, and there's a man to the top of them. Spanish is spoken, toilets are open, perhaps we're in Bogotá. Albuquerque's Le Chat Lunatique felt right at home in Bogotá.

The gypsy jazz band made its first, but likely not its last, visit to Colombia in early September in time for the 23rd Festival Internacional de Jazz del Teatro Libre.

Director and native Colombian Fernando Garavito had submitted Le Chat's promo pack to festival organizers when visiting friends in February. "In June, we received an invitation that said, 'We really like what you're doing, it's a very fresh idea,'" says Garavito. "Kind of surprising that nearby people in Colombia really have not heard the rebirth of gypsy jazz or it's happening in the rest of the world."

Well, they've heard it now. Le Chat Lunatique made some fun friends in Colombia who can help spread word of the band from Bogotá to Berlin.

Gypsy Ambassadors

The band conducted a workshop and played two concerts in Bogotá. The first concert, a five-act at Universidad de los Andes, attracted an enthusiastic audience of about 100 students. The second filled the Teatro Libre with a significantly larger and equally engaged paying crowd.

The audience was, indeed, unfamiliar with gypsy jazz. "We had to sort of describe it

over and over again," says guitarist John Sandlin. The lack of familiarity, however, did not dampen listeners' enthusiasm. The band was happily surprised that their stage patter and the elevated wailing in their solos were not entirely lost on the audience, despite the language difference.

Video to Vinyl

The band captured the attention of a video company, amplifedevs, that had got word of the group through a friend of Putnam's. "They liked our music," says violinist Muni Kulasinghe, "so they made five videos of us. It helps us in terms of getting more press, high-quality video. But then they're using it as a promotion for themselves."

Meanwhile, a new record company, Sandango Records, will press vinyl CDs using soundtracks from two of the videos. The company distributes its wares in Colombia, Puerto Rico and Berlin.

The Good, the Bad and the Beauty Appliance

"I think our trip was a very fortunate one," says Garavito. "Great hosts. The festival was fantastic. The warmth of the people. I think that it puts you in a very good place."

So can the coca leaves that the band brought back to the States, engaging the interest of a "cute puppy dog being handled by a burly policeman" in the Houston airport, says bassist Jared Putnam. (No one was detained.)

The success in Colombia reaffirms for Le Chat Lunatique that it has something to offer audiences well beyond Albuquerque. "We play in Albuquerque a lot, and we have a lot of diehard fans here who really love us, and we really love them, like they're good



friends at this point," says Kulasinghe. "But when we play in other places—standing ovations in both concerts. Really full-on enthusiastic."

There is a price to pay, though, for the adulation. As the band was leaving Bogotá, an inspector at the airport discovered Putnam's delicate mustache scissors in his carry-on bag. "They got confiscated," says Putnam.

"I'm sure they're in the scanner and mail clips Black market in Bogotá," says Garavito.

"Yesterday, I was at the grocery store looking for a replacement for them, and they were 10 dollars," says Putnam.

"That's because they're luxury appliances," Kulasinghe explains. Perhaps he can wire it off. ☛

Le Chat Lunatique
Upcoming gigs ...

THURSDAY, OCT. 13, 8:30 P.M.

Scale 11 Bar
3000 Central SW
Free will donor
scale11bar.com/entertainment

FRIDAY, OCT. 14, 8:30 P.M.

Venora Hidden Valley Steakhouse
6550 Fourth Street NW
Free will donor
thehiddenvalley.com
lechatlunatique.com

Comment on this article at alibi.com

The Weekly ALIBI, Albuquerque, NM October 6, 2011



Le Chat Lunatique
EP Release Party
With *The Midnight Creepers*, *The Saltine Ramblers* and *Eva Ave & Carlosaur*
8p, Sat., Dec. 5
Historic El Rey Theater
620 Central SW,
505.242.2353
\$10 (1/2 price CD with admission)
lechatlunatique.com
elreytheater.com

Upon the arrival of Le Chat Lunatique, the local music scene took a decided turn. No longer was the indie kids the coolest on the block. Rather, it was four guys sporting peculiar mustaches who were always dressed really well. Their biggest influence wasn't Kurt Cobain, it was Django Reinhardt. And their instruments of choice didn't require amps stacked to the ceiling. Years later, one would be hard pressed to find a music lover in town who didn't know the members of Le Chat — Muni Kulasinghe, Jared Putnam, Fernando Garavito and John Sandlin — on a first name basis.

The group's latest recording, *Under the Covers Vol. 1*, is an EP that finds the band in a very cheeky mood. How else can you explain swing versions of Paula Abdul's "Straight Up" and "House of the Rising Sun" by The Animals? Other songs on the EP, which will be released on Dec. 5 with a performance at El Rey Theater, are a rousing version of "Minnie the Moocher," the 1946 classic "La Mer" (most will recognize it as "Beyond the Sea") and the French children's song "Frère Jacques." —KH

FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL
23 JAZZ
TEATRO LIBRE


Greg Diamond
SEPTIEMBRE 7 7-10 P.M.
Auditorio Alberto Caicedo


Le chat lunatique
SEPTIEMBRE 6 7-10 P.M.
Auditorio Alberto Caicedo


Andrés Ortiz Trio
SEPTIEMBRE 7 7-10 P.M.
Auditorio Alberto Caicedo


Sofia Ribeiro y Juan Andrés Ospina
"Doña de Sabao"
SEPTIEMBRE 8 7-10 P.M.
Auditorio Alberto Caicedo


Sebastian Schunke
SEPTIEMBRE 9 7-10 P.M.
Auditorio Alberto Caicedo

INSCRÍBASE PARA CADA CONCIERTO EN:
<http://eventos.uniandes.edu.co>

Universidad de los Andes
TEATRO LIBRE
Centro Cultural
Decanatura de Estudiantes
Facultad de Artes y Humanidades

Local IQ, Albuquerque, NM December 3, 2009



Jazz band is too cool for cats

A MUTUAL love of gypsy swing group Hot Club of France brought John Sandlin and Muni Kulasinghe from Le Chat Lunatique together.

Now with fellow musicians Jared Putnam and Fernando Garavito, they're making waves with their own swing band and have travelled over from Albuquerque, New Mexico, to perform a rare gig in

Gloucestershire.

You can catch the award-winning band at Ingleside House and Gardens in Cirencester tomorrow at 7.30pm.

Support comes from local band Swing from Paris.

Entry is £10 and there will be a barbecue and bar.

gloucestershire.co.uk/crackerjack

The Gloucestershire ECHO, Gloucestershire (UK) June 18, 2009

Best Local Jazz Le Chat Lunatique

The name for this category was "Best Local Jazz Club," but Le Chat Lunatique's brand of gypsy jazz-meets-Western swing garnered so many votes, it's clear you think this mustachioed quartet turns any venue into the city's best jazz club.

www.lechatlunatique.com

ALSO IN THE TOP 5:

Diego Arencon Trio

Tommy Gearhart

WWW.ABQTHEMAG.COM

Best Jazz Act

Le Chat Lunatique

Many hurrahs and accolades to Albuquerque's favorite Gypsy jazz/Western swing act—who won in a landslide—for providing sophistication and carefree revelry to the Rio Grande valley. DJ Jazzy Jeff's got nothing on Le Chat Lunatique.

The Weekly ALIBI, Albuquerque NM April 3, 2008

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CULTURE

New Mexico **Best List**

Back to the 1920s with local band's mangy gypsy jazz

By Brandon Gadea

Modern jazz is often associated with ratty clubs frequented by sophisticated city sophisticates. However, for Le Chat Lunatique, the definition could hardly be more accurate. The Albuquerque quartet specializes in what they call "blinky, mangy jazz," a nodding nod to the would-be night of jazz in the greatest of gypsy-quadras.

Le Chat Lunatique
8/20/08 at the HQ
Thursday, 10 p.m.
\$4



...in a cramped, half-acre space and full original, Putnam said, he probably is staying in the band to share the love. In the process of completing an album of live recordings, the band is in the process of recording an album of live recordings of original songs. Le Chat Lunatique is also in the process of recording a live album.

The band's dedication to the music of the era was not just a nod to their ancestors, however, the members also of swing, taking the stage in gypsy style and the

The Local IQ, Albuquerque, NM March 6, 2008

Best Local Band

WINNER: LE CHAT LUNATIQUE
RUNNER UP: FELONIOUS GROOVE FOUNDATION
When we featured this Gypsy-Western Swing foursome in our Valentine's Day issue to announce their recently released debut studio recording, *Demonic Lovey*, there was no way to know they'd also land on our "Smart List" and in two categories! It appears these sharply dressed cats will be waxing their mustaches for a long time to come. —BD

Best Jazz Artist/Group

WINNER: LE CHAT LUNATIQUE
Also chosen as "Best Band" by our judges, Le Chat is undeniably cool. —BD



Le Chat Lunatique

The mustachioed foursome is gangster garb blends together seemingly unblendable musical styles—think classical with reggae—for some of the most mesmerizing foot-tapping songs you'll ever hear. www.lechatlunatique.com

Albuquerque The Magazine, NM, January 2008



Sharp dressed men, tack sharp jazz

BY BRIAN MCKENRY

And, Brod Swing, Dixie. To say that the aforementioned sub-genres of jazz are anything short of complex and diverse, is to grossly oversimplify. Jazz and its offspring, as do the musicians who play them, run the gamut from friendly and warm to uptight and delectable.

So where does Albuquerque's own jazzing quartet Le Chat Lunatique fit in the spectrum? Which of these adjectives describe them? All of them, actually... and more.

One of Albuquerque's most popular acts, gypsy jazz quartet Le Chat Lunatique unveils its debut studio effort, *Demonic Lovey*, with a CD release party on, of all days, St. Valentine's Day at Laneshead. Supporting acts include Jasper, The Jordan Orchestra and Felix y Los Gatos.

best lines are provided by Jared Putnam's stand-up bass, Muni Kulasinghe's fiddle induces the scottish edge to get up and swing for no reason at all and the band's perfect vocal harmonies combine in a way to make it damn near impossible to listen to without smiling.

As for the debonair part, these four dashing musicians look as comfortable playing a Downtown bar as they would drinking Regal rosé wine and entertaining motorists at a Chicago speakeasy. Period musicians reminiscent of Reinhardt, abound in this group and these four have never met a pretense they didn't like. It's almost enough to make one pine for the jernubbing days of Prohibition.

But despite Le Chat Lunatique's eccentric, stylings and frenetic genre-tapping, the group's list of upcoming gigs belie their ability to charm any crowd. A typical Le Chat Lunatique dancefloor is just as likely to be populated with wine-tipping baby boomers as 1950-quoting millennials. "Our gigs are great," Sandlin said, "but restaurant shows are really fun. It's hard to have a favorite."

Curious rhythms are driven as much by Sandlin's strings as they are by drummer Fernando Garavito's sticks. The tapping

PROFILE

Le Chat Lunatique
CD RELEASE PARTY
Sp. Thu., Feb 14
WITH JASPER, THE JORDAN ORCHESTRA AND FELIX Y LOS GATOS
LANESHED
215 Central SW, 254.9987
\$7
lechatlunatique.com
laneshed.com