



Gonzalo Bergara Quartet

“A masterpiece of a new kind of Gypsy Jazz” **Vintage Guitar**

“A blazing quartet” **JazzTimes**

“Editor’s Pick” **GuitarPlayer**



gonzalobergara.com

Presenter Endorsements...

“We were very pleased with the Gonzalo Bergara Quartet program last night. They are a talented group and our audience responded enthusiastically to their music and technical expertise. We found the group extremely easy to work with. I might add that after the concert last night our Board entertained the group for dinner. They really enjoyed the opportunity for visiting and learning more about the group, their background and musical experiences. It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening.”

Marvin Locke, President
Tehama County Community Concert Association

“The show was a huge success, and we are so happy Leah joined the group!”

Jane Rincon, Program Chair
Seacoast Entertainment Association

“It was a special night at the Playhouse. Leah Zeger is a great addition to the band! We have presented them three times and love to work with them. They are all pro and totally charming guys to host.”

David Ferney, Theater Manager
Arcata Playhouse

“...we were totally amazed at this group! Several patrons said, ‘You saved the best for the last!’ They closed our 2012-2013 Fine Arts Season in grand style. It was outstanding. I liked their stage presence, the verbal comments, the camaraderie that they enjoyed with each other, and the superior skill of each artist. Gonzalo sets a high standard. They have an added pizzazz with Leah Zeger, the violinist, singer, and "special grace" on the stage. We would recommend them highly. // Their school performance was very memorable. The 250 Idaho Arts Charter middle and high school students in Nampa were absolutely focused and responding to every nuance. // Their program was a pleasure in the variety of sounds, original music, and jazz standards. The ensemble's charming personalities made a good impression on Caldwell Fine Arts audiences-- youth to senior citizens.”

Sylvia Hunt, Managing Director
Caldwell Fine Arts Series

“It was our pleasure to present Gonzalo and the group. I really enjoyed them and know our audience did. The dinner after the performance was great fun.”

Ann Purvis,
Port Ludlow Arts Council

CerritosInk

Reviews of shows from the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts and other local venues published by the Los Cerritos Community News. The writer and paper are in their eighteenth year of covering these events.

Gonzalo Bergara Quartet/Quintet Makes it Sierra Club Hot

By Glen Creason, SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 2012



I am not proud to admit I knew nothing of the Gonzalo Bergara “quartet” before their sold-out concert in the Sierra Room this week and can’t believe I waited this long to hear such exciting and superbly textured music. If you appreciate the incredible recordings of the great gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt or the sizzling violin excursions of Stephane Grappelli you will have found a contemporary source of such sweet sounds coming from this international group based right here in the southland. What makes this even more wonderful for lovers of real roots music and authentic jazz is that this quartet was less one member and instead of the powerhouse horns of Rob Hardt, they used the electrifying violin of Leah Zeger. Now, on any other stage within the use of human ears this young lady would dwarf the talent around her. However, this band is lead by Gonzalo Bergara, a young Argentine guitar virtuoso who takes a back seat to no one I have heard in my eighteen years of covering shows at the big hall. Bergara is ably assisted by another gypsy flavored rhythm guitarist Jeff Radaich and Brian Netzley on a souped up double bass but on this night the combination of the violin and lead guitar made this music soar and swing like it was 1935 in Paris again.

If Bergara has a flaw it is that he does not play for reviewers and thus is pretty loose on identifying songs which said reviewers might rave about and get folks to buy. Then again, who listens to reviewers? Yet, this is music to hear live and it really did warm the soul to hear the tight harmonies and fiery solos that took these compositions to places where few can dare or have the skills to express. To be truly compared to Django and Stephane is about as high a compliment as any musician can garner. On the very fine night at Cerritos the show was opened in ear and eyes by what may have been “Portena Soledad” that sent a current of *le jazz hot* through the jam-packed Sierra room and set the pace for much to come. A Django Reinhardt tune followed with the appropriate nod to the inspiration for this lively style of jazz and the temperatures only cooled slightly in the lyrical “February,” one of several swinging months penned by Bergara for his recent albums. “Agridulce” showed a little Brazilian flavor but when the group returned to America for “It Had to Be You” the beautiful Ms. Zeger showed a voice to match her superb violin.

<http://cerritosink.blogspot.com/2012/03/gonzalo-bergara-quartet-march-22-2012.html>

Sadly the young lady left the stage but the spirited playing of “Como Una Flor” was bittersweet along with the page turning to “November” that was totally cool.

The second half had some surprises and plenty of high octane gypsy jazz that began with three tunes from the first album and a short return to an old Nat King Cole hit “L-O-V-E” that Jeff Radaich did a fine job on with his family cheering him on. Another cool month was represented in “October” with a silky lyricism and Bergara’s meticulous guitar weaving an enchanting spell but just warming up to the tour de force performance of “I’ll See You in My Dreams” that could only have been done by a master. The many fans of gypsy melodies got a treat with “Czardas de Monte” where Leah Zeder’s exquisitely played delicate middle passage had folks actually swooning in the audience. They kept swooning and swinging for the sensual and evocative “La Muerte De Un Lobo Bueno” following by a dynamic remembrance of Django Reinhardt’s evergreen “Nuages” that left the band with many satisfied fans and many new ones. The Readers Digest version of this review is that anyone who hears this band will love them and be amazed at the levels of musicianship on stage.



Gonzalo Bergara – Portena Soledad

Features>Music Reviews by Michael Dregni

Published November 11, 2009

For years, friends and fans have begged Gonzalo Bergara to record. Finally, he has a debut CD – and it's been worth the wait.

Bergara hails from Argentina but is based in California. Both locales infuse his music; a nostalgic melancholy weaves through, a lasting impression of Buenos Aires and a rainy-day tango in the district of Palermo, perhaps. At the same time, there's a wide-open sense of possibilities – the other side of the coin, thanks to the wonders of California.

Bergara has honed his chops as John Jorgenson's rhythm guitarist of choice over the past several years. And Jorgenson lends clarinet to one track here. But still, Bergara's music is all his own.

There are no covers of Django tunes, no overplayed American jazz or Gypsy jazz classics. Instead, these are all originals – and they are the better and more intriguing for that.

The album kicks off with the rollicking swing of "B-612," displaying Bergara's hot licks, just in case you had any doubts. With his playing established, he then moves off to explore other avenues. "Elena's Bossa" rides a stylish Latin rhythm while "Charcos" is an introspective, bluesy ballad. Throughout, the emphasis is on musicality. His playing is virtuosic, sure. But there's so much more.

The album ends on a sentimental note with the title track, which recalls nuevo tanguero Astor Piazzolla's Verano Porte o suite, an ode to the moods of Buenos Aires. Coco Trivisonno adds bandoneon along with Benedikt Brydern's violin, and with Bergara's Gypsy guitar leading the way, they create a glorious and lasting melody.

In all, this album is a masterpiece of a new kind of Gypsy jazz, taking Django's work as a starting point for creating very personal music.

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<http://www.vintageguitar.com/3801/gonzalo-bergara-portena-soledad/>

Gonzalo Bergara Quartet

Nails it at Djangofest

by Dave on June 7th, 2009



On the recommendation of a good friend, I headed into Mill Valley for Djangofest last night. The artist that was suggested to me was Stochelo Rosenberg – the famous gipsy Jazz guitar player that I was inclined to like just because he’s named Rosenberg. And he was good. Actually, he was great. But it was the opening act – the Gonzalo Bergara Quartet – that really knocked my socks off.

First, a note about Djangofest. It takes place every year in Mill Valley, California and for four nights soloists and bands come to play tribute to Django Reinhardt – generally considered the greatest gipsy Jazz guitar player of all-time. The show is really a treat. Not only does it take place in Mill Valley (one of the most wonderful towns in the world), but the musicians are excellent. And people really come out for this one. The house was packed last night. Read on for more about The Gonzalo Bergara Quartet.

The group is all acoustic and has four musicians (did anything in their name give it away?) – Jeffrey Radaich on Rhythm Guitar, Rob Hardt on Clarinet and Tenor Saxophone and Brian Netzley on Upright Bass and of course, Gonzalo Bergara on lead acoustic guitar. The group has two factors that catapult them into another dimension. First of all, the group is tight. Each member of the group fits in with the band perfectly. I usually don’t like a lot of wind instruments with my guitars but Rob Hardt was wonderful whether he was playing clarinet or sax. Netzley kept things moving with a steady and pumping bass-line and Radaich played a steady rhythm guitar that held its own.

But what really makes this band shine is Gonzalo Bergara. This Argentinian plays like he has had a guitar in his hand from birth. His fingers just fly across the fretboard and the music wraps itself around you and catapults you. Yes, he plays very much in the style of Django but his own compositions also have a latin flavor from his own Argentina. That flavor gives the songs a kick. The band’s one-hour and twenty minute set last night brought the house to its feet for a standing ovation – blown away by what it had seen. I wouldn’t say that Bergara is better than Django. He’s different. But the difference adds something new to the gipsy Jazz genre. It’s gipsy jazz but with a new flavor. When the set was over I tuned to my wife and told her (still amazed), “That was some of the best musicianship I have ever seen.” I don’t think Stochelo Rosenberg has ever had a run for his money like he did last night.

Gonzalo Bergara Quartet. You heard it here first.

<http://www.fretbase.com/blog/2009/06/gonzalo-bergara-quartet-nails-it-at-djangofest/>

GONZALO BERGARA

SOME OF THESE DAYS

TRACK Some of These Days

ARTIST Gonzalo Bergara (guitar)

CD Portena Soledad (Independent Label)

Recorded: North Hollywood, CA, 2007



RATING: 96/100 (learn more)

There's no shortage of Hot Club swing groups covering this antique chestnut of a tune; it's fun to play and audiences never seem to get tired of hearing it. Improvising through these changes with any degree of freshness is quite another matter. From stage left, enter Gonzalo Bergara.

Perhaps this Argentine guitarist, composer and teacher isn't such big news to West Coast jazz Manouche fans, who have had the opportunity to hear him in venues around his current California stomping grounds, but his playing was quite a shock to this East Coaster when I heard him at the 2008 Django in June event in Massachusetts.

Here's the thing: it's not just the chops, which are considerable, or the speed and dexterity of his execution, impressive though it may be. It's the attack... rarely have I heard a right-hand technique with more nuance. On "Some of These Days" (the album's only non-original tune), pearlescent lines rapid-fire from the fretboard as if his fingers are kissing each note with lapidary precision, bringing fresh sparkle and polish to a priceless old jewel. Don't miss these kisses.

Reviewer: Bill Barnestaking

<http://www.vintageguitar.com/3801/gonzalo-bergara-portena-soledad/>